Commentary

Volume Seventy-nine, Number Four, April 1985

ISRAEL'S ECONOMIC CRISIS

What Israel Must Do
Stuart E. Eizenstat

What the U.S. Can Do
Steven L. Spiegel

Terrorizing Children
Joseph Adelson & Chester E. Finn, Jr.

The "Real" Marx
Gertrude Himmelfarb

Paul Celan: The Strain of Jewishness
John Felstiner

When the Pipes Froze—A Story
Linda Collins

Four Cheers for Capitalism
Tod Lindberg

Books in Review: Richard S. Levy / Peter Shaw / Henrik Bering-Jensen / Spencer Warren / Edward Pearce

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Letters from Readers

The Democratic Defeat

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Joshua Muravchik's "Why the Democrats Lost" [January] was right on target. I would add only three observations.

By extending to an absurd length the list of minorities entitled to "special advantages," the McGovernites succeeded only in ridding the majority of the sense of guilt that fostered majority consent to the iniquities of affirmative action.

By stressing "compassion" and pressing for more and more social services, the McGovernites succeeded only in reminding people of the egregious inefficiency of the federal bureaucracy and the extraordinary cost of that inefficiency.

And by incessantly attacking the United States, the McGovernites succeeded only in arousing a defensive reaction so intense that the majority now refuses to accept or tolerate even legitimate criticism.

In sum, the McGovernites have succeeded in transforming a minute Republican party into the party of the majority, something the Republicans probably could never have accomplished by themselves. . . .

RAYMOND GARMEL
Indianapolis, Indiana

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Joshua Muravchik's factual, well-documented, and very well-written "Why the Democrats Lost" made me feel like weeping when I recalled how the majority of my fellow Jews voted and how, even today, the fact that they stood almost alone only confirms to them, in their own eyes, their superior prescience and virtue.

When asked during the campaign how they could justify Mondale's not telling Jesse Jackson, in effect, to get lost because of the latter's anti-Semitic utterances, Jews who were pro-Mondale told me that obviously Mondale could not do that since he needed the votes of Jackson supporters. In other words, there were more important priorities than condemning anti-Semitism.

It is clear to anyone willing to look that the Soviet Union is by far the most serious threat to Jews, having both the intent and the power to inflict grievous injury on Jewry in general and on Israel in particular. According to Mondale supporters, however, one is not supposed to say the Soviets are "evil." But consider: the Soviets will not let Jews leave their country (at least medieval Spain expelled them); they will not let Jews teach their religion, or Hebrew, or Jewish culture; they confine both Jewish and other dissenters in cruel and barbaric prisons and mental institutions; they limit career advancement for Jews; they print virulently anti-Semitic tracts; they are the major outside supplier of arms, intelligence, and foreign military personnel to the Arab states most hostile to Israel; and they are aggressively expansionist. It is supposed to be unduly primitive to say so, but the Soviets control an empire, which they seek to extend; and wherever they or their proxies are in control, it is bad for the Jews. It is as clear as anything can be that Judaism in general and Israel in particular cannot thrive in a world dominated by the Soviet Union.

But is it the Soviets whom the majority of American Jews most fear and seek to counter? Apparently not. They did not favor the candidate who, as shown by Mr. Muravchik, stood for a strong defense and for resisting the Soviets; they voted for the other candidate who, on his record, had for a long time favored a weak defense and who had placed such conditions on the use of force as to make the threat thereof not credible. They voted for the candidate under whose administration as Vice President the Soviets expanded their empire as against the candidate under whose administration the Soviets had not gained one inch. . . .

It appears that the main reason the majority of Jews voted against Reagan was that he was supported by the Moral Majority. What is so fearsome about the Moral Majority? It is backed by no missiles or armies. It operates in a democratic society in which its adherents can gain power only through the ballot. While some of its members have spoken of a "Christian country," its leadership has not endorsed anti-Semitism and it is not allied with a ruthless anti-Semitic power. Its actions and program are strongly pro-Israel, whether or not one agrees with its reasons for being so. In addition, many of the

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values espoused by the Moral Majority are classically Jewish ones: sexual morality . . .; strong family life . . .; opposition to pornography; . . . deep patriotism for America. . . .

While Mondale's ally, Jesse Jackson, embraces Yasir Arafat (and exclaims "Viva Fidel!" and preaches that history is on the side of the anti-American, anti-Zionist Sandinistas), Reagan's ally, the Moral Majority, strongly suppports Israel. But the pro-Mondale Jews did not like the Moral Majority's reasons for supporting Israel, so they voted for Mondale.

To repeat in English a Yiddish expression I used on occasion to hear from my mother, "Were it not my fool, I'd be laughing too."

LEONARD S. SANDWEISS
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

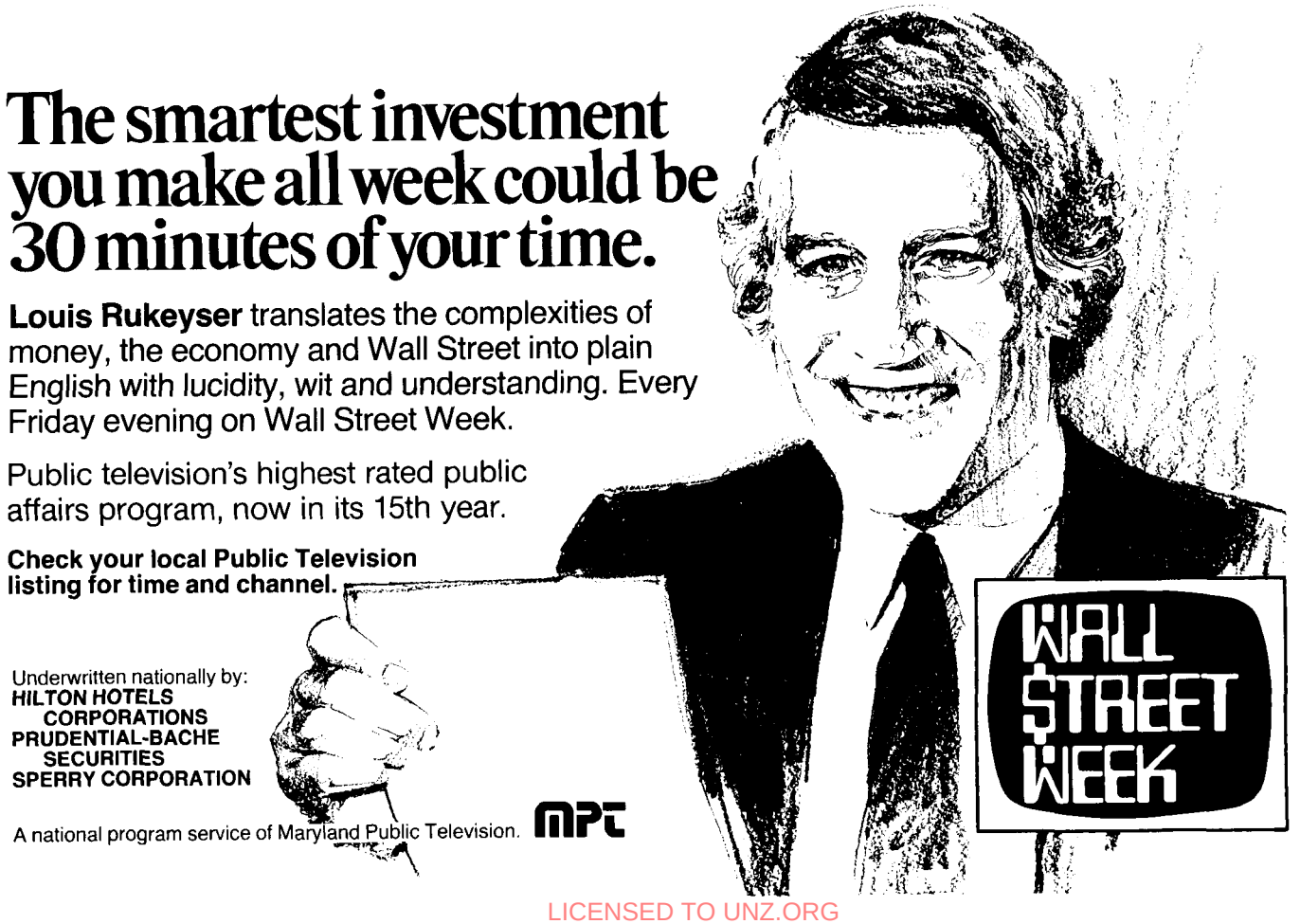
Joshua Muravchik's article has very little to do with why those who did choose to vote cast their ballots for Ronald Reagan. Basically, the country was still involved in a recovery from a severe recession induced in significant measure by the economic policies of the Reagan administration. The recovery, based on a decidedly lowered income for those working, created the feeling that an *employed* person had to be grateful. The largely OPEC-induced high rate of inflation during the Carter years had been reduced and the voters counted that as a plus for Reagan. The deficit was misperceived by the electorate as an abstraction that had little connection to its immediate interests.

Internationally, despite casualties in the terrorist bombing in Lebanon and the Grenada invasion, there was no sustained Vietnam-like bloodletting or a long period of American helplessness as in the hostage crisis in Iran. Reagan's softness in lifting the Soviet grain embargo and weakening the sanctions against Poland did little to hurt his militantly patriotic image.

These, then, were the positive aspects which practically assured Reagan's victory. Yet . . . the outcome in the congressional races indicated that the Reagan coattails were short indeed. The American voters hedged their bets, and Reagan did not get a clear-cut mandate for his domestic and foreign-policy programs or for the Republican platform.

Was the Democratic-party campaign without flaws in tactics and strategy? Decidedly not. It is entirely possible that Mondale could have done better, but hardly for any of the reasons Mr. Muravchik cites.

The AFL-CIO departed further from its historic past by venturing forth into the primary contests . . . and its efforts saved Mondale's neck in the primaries. Organized labor, however, was relegated by the Mondale inner circle to the role of technician, not of policy-maker. . . . This continued at the convention, with Mondale cravenly courting Gary Hart and Jesse Jackson to the reprehensible extent of refusing to include a plank against anti-Semitism in the plat-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form. And during the campaign itself, aside from rightly reversing his earlier support for the Chrysler bail-out, Mondale made no mention of the concept so closely associated with Hubert Humphrey—full employment. . . .

Mondale missed the opportunity to dramatize the impact of the deficit on taxpayers by neglecting to underscore the billions of dollars being paid in interest on this debt to foreign and domestic banks. His proposal to raise taxes was easily and effectively portrayed by Reagan as a burden to the taxpayer-voter. . . .

The Ferraro candidacy, although flawed by the Ferraro-Zaccaro family's finances, . . . was an important symbol. Overall, based on her views and record, Geraldine Ferraro certainly stands head and shoulders above Gerald Ford, Spiro Agnew, Richard Nixon, and George Bush. But the hope that she would have an impact on the voting turned out to be exaggerated. As voting patterns since the passage of women's suffrage have shown, women by and large vote as men do. . . .

But perhaps the most disturbing aspect of Mr. Muravchik's case is his attack on Governor Cuomo's magnificent convention speech. Mr. Muravchik calls it among the "most radical" at the convention because it compared the feeling of mutuality of a family with the compassionate concern of a nation in caring for the welfare of its children, the aged, the hungry, and the disabled. Indeed, Mr. Muravchik says that Cuomo's "radical" confusion has an ". . . appalling consequence: . . . the totalitarian state." Mr. Muravchik would seem to view any government action in the area of caring for people as an ". . . intrusion into [their] lives . . ." that leads us ". . . down a path where freedom is not likely to endure." He does write, in passing, that "We do, to be sure, owe important obligations to our fellow citizens. . . ." Does Mr. Muravchik count among these obligations full employment, decent affordable housing, quality education, a clean environment, excellent health care, labor laws which defend the fundamental democratic right of association? One would hope that these objectives of equity, which, it must be underscored, do *not* exist in totalitarian states, are compatible with democracy. . . .

ISRAEL KUGLER
Long Island City, New York

JOSHUA MURAVCHIK writes:

I thank Raymond Garmel and Leonard S. Sandweiss for their generous words and interesting comments.

Israel Kugler argues that Reagan won because the voters gave him credit for what they mistakenly believed was a return of prosperity, and that in so doing they were not actually registering support for his policies. Those satisfied with the current state of the Democratic party produced many, mutually contradictory, alibis for the party's crushing defeat in 1984, but, to my knowledge, Mr. Kugler is the first to try to wrap all of them into a single argument.

Whatever the ultimate cost of the deficits, prosperity at present is no illusion. According to the government's initial calculations, real disposable income was up by 6.8 percent in 1984, the largest increase in twenty years.

Nonetheless, the economy did not account for Reagan's entire margin. Numerous polls showed that while it was the biggest single issue, defense and foreign policy were also important. And, according to the Democrats' own polls, these were especially important to those Democrats who defected to Reagan. But perhaps more important than any single issue was the vast disparity between the two candidates in the voters' perception of their capacities for "strong leadership." I believe that Mondale's deficit in this area had much to do with his consistent softness on national-security issues and his incessant pandering to each of the Democrats' strident, quota-mongering demographic caucuses. With respect to the latter, Geraldine Ferraro was indeed, as Mr. Kugler says, "an important symbol."

The Democrats' success in House races may signify less than Mr. Kugler would wish. In its final published analysis of its 1984 exit polling, ABC News said: "Reagan's mandate is strong and clear and belongs not just to the President but to his party as well. The results show the Democrats were extremely lucky that the damage below the Presidency was not worse and suggest that in some near-future election it could be."

Lastly, I of course do not consider "any government action in the area of caring for people" as a worrisome intrusion into their lives. I favor the welfare state and do so for a number of reasons, but not because I regard some unknown schoolteacher in Duluth in the same way I regard my own family.

The advent of free societies was inspired by the articulation of a philosophy that asserted the primacy of the individual. The spread of freedom in the world has been slowed in the 20th century by the emergence of totalitarianism. Every totalitarian society has rested both on force and on ideology. The ideologies have varied, but all have shared the exaltation of some collective unit—the nation, the class, the society—above the individual.

Most people put members of their families ahead of themselves in myriad ways. To argue that we should think of the nation as one big family is to take a very large step toward demanding the subordination of the individual to the nation. Conversely, it belittles the family. The Democrats have lost ground on the "family issue" because of their stands on a number of other issues that bring into question traditional values. Their effort to recoup this ground by equating family and nation ironically serves only to reveal how poorly attuned they have become to the special place that family holds in the lives of most Americans.

As You Like It

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In "Shakespeare in the Original" [December 1984] Fernanda Eberstadt says that in *Henry V* Shakespeare comes down clearly on the side of individual responsibility. Yet what I got from the play was the sufficiency of following orders, something much derided in our time. For example, in Act IV, Scene 1, the justice of the king's cause and the honor of his quarrel are "more than we know" and "more than we should seek after, for we know enough if we know we are the king's subjects. If his cause be wrong, our obedience to the king wipes the crime of it out of us"; ". . . to disobey [the king] were against all proportion of subjection." I am not a literary person, so I would appreciate Miss Eberstadt's comment.

ROBERT CARLEN
Stony Brook, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I am grateful to Fernanda Eberstadt for her informative and provocative coverage of Shakespeare scholarship. However, I want to

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quibble with her tendency to identify Shakespeare with his characters, and especially with the claim that Shakespeare "affirms" the values of nationality, religion, and sexism.

This approach misses what is at the core of Shakespeare's greatness —the absence of a specifiable core. It also explains other dramatists like Euripides, whom it was fitting that Shakespeare knew, and who shared Shakespeare's dark and eclectic vision. Such greatness is not in the simple affirmation of any selected values or beliefs or outlooks; rather, the affirmation (if it can even be called that) is the drama itself, the rich and multifarious panoply of characters and viewpoints, conjoined necessarily with a deliberate absence of a simple identification with any of them. . . .

Miss Eberstadt sees Shakespeare as religious and nationalistic in the *Henrys*, but profoundly ironic in *The Taming of the Shrew*. She neither faults nor credits him with "affirming" the male chauvinistic views so widely held in his time. However, she points out with some sympathy that Ann Thompson finds Shakespeare "rather more comfortable in that world [of male supremacy] than we might like him to have been."

This kind of criticism runs in hopeless circles: sometimes we find our values in Shakespeare's characters and are pleased; we then attribute certain views to Shakespeare. At other times we have to acknowledge, as a matter of scholarly honesty, that Shakespeare's values are not ours, not what they should be, and we have to fault him for being like his characters. At still other times we think we are absolutely sure that Shakespeare is unlike, say, Iago, Richard III, Lady Macbeth.

This effort to extract or disentangle Shakespeare from his characters misses the mark. It is possible that the nationalistic and religious affirmations that appear in the texts are not Shakespeare's, and it is even possible, indeed likely, that the "endorsement of patriarchy" in *The Taming of the Shrew* is not Shakespeare's. What is the evidence for this? Only the tremendous variety of all that there is in Shakespeare.

Dr. Thompson's and Miss Eberstadt's attempts to pin Shakespeare down become so entangled that they are at least unwittingly ironic. The view of Dr. Thompson, and perhaps also of Miss Eberstadt, that Katherine's spirit is not broken at the end of the play and that "Petruchio . . . freed . . . her creative powers" (hence Shakespeare was not all that sexist) is an example of this. The clearer evidence is that Petruchio does break Katherine's spirit, that Petruchio is sexist in the extreme, but that we need not equate Shakespeare with Petruchio. Yes, it is entirely appropriate "not to force" Petruchio's views on Shakespeare, but it is also inappropriate to read Petruchio's accomplishments as anything but sexist. Likewise sexist is any approval of Katherine's conversion at the end.

Miss Eberstadt makes much of the *ad hoc* moral ending, Katherine's acceptance of her new situation, and the presumed credibility the play acquires with this ending. But endings can be perfunctory, even in Shakespeare. Petruchio and Kate might not live happily, and Shakespeare can be said to have given us a mockery of Petruchio, and of Katherine's conversion, rather than an "affirmation" of what the ending presumably represents.

I suggest, without dogma but in the spirit of idle and playful countering, that the ending of *The Taming of the Shrew* is not credible—merely conventional. "And they lived happily ever after . . ." affirms the ethos of (a marriage) comedy, but such an ethos ought never to be taken seriously, only ironically. Petruchio and Katherine, in the afterworld of marriage, will soon be at it again, hammer and tongs, or else Katherine would really have been transformed into the zombie that Miss Eberstadt denies she has become.

One could well make a case for Shakespeare as egalitarian, as nonsexist, and non-patriarchal. Look at Lady Macbeth, at Beatrice, etc. However, I would be hoist by my own petard if I attempted it as an alternative to its opposite. I make it only as a reminder of Shakespeare's dramatic richness. . . .

Miss Eberstadt is pleased that Kenneth Muir's introduction to *Troilus and Cressida* "restores health and balance to a play in which critics before him have seen only cynicism and dissolution." What one can be sure of is that there are more things in Shakespeare's dramas than are dreamt of by critics, and so long as "corrections" of interpretations are additive and not subtractive, we are on the proper path.

MORRIS GROSSMAN
Fairfield University
Fairfield, Connecticut

FERNANDA EBERSTADT writes:

In answer to Robert Carlen, Henry and the foot soldiers are discussing how far a ruler's responsibility for his subjects extends. A very particular case is raised: if a soldier has committed a crime in civilian life and dies in battle unabsolved, is his damnation on the king's head? No, says Shakespeare. Every man is responsible for his own private actions, for how he conducts his affairs. The playwright goes on to suggest, however, that there are two separate accounts, two separate spheres of action: a man's personal conduct, for which he alone is responsible, and his duty as a citizen and subject, which is to serve his country. Today we seem to have got these accounts confused. It's a man's civic duty, seemingly, to question (or condemn) his country's actions, but if he gets into trouble, it's not his own fault but society that is to blame.

Morris Grossman's letter, however "idle and playful" its intent, is an exercise in precisely the kind of willful misreading my piece cautioned against: the critical tendency to foist on a 16th-century author one's own assumptions and prejudices.

Mr. Grossman's complaints proceed from the belief that I call Shakespeare "sexist" in *The Taming of the Shrew*, a charge he takes issue with because although he himself finds the character Petruchio "sexist in the extreme," he sees no evidence that Petruchio speaks for Shakespeare.

The only trouble is that I never accused Shakespeare of "sexism" (a term Mr. Grossman seems to have promoted to a kind of Aristotelian category for understanding the world). On the contrary, in my discussion of the Cambridge *Taming of the Shrew*, I praised Ann Thompson, the play's editor and a confessed feminist, for refraining from imposing this foreign and extraneous outlook on the play. Mr. Grossman's quarrel is therefore not with me but with Dr. Thompson, whose words he attributes to me while putting sentiments in both our mouths that neither of us has uttered.

Mr. Grossman's remarks, how-

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ever, express a now-popular view of *The Taming of the Shrew* which deserves further examination. In my discussion of the Cambridge edition, I noted that the play has long been subjected to feminist attentions. Earlier in this century feminists (Bernard Shaw included) were content to attack *The Taming of the Shrew* as a despicable "endorsement of patriarchy" (the phrase is Dr. Thompson's, and not mine). In recent years, however, trendy critics and directors have chosen in their wisdom to read *The Taming of the Shrew* as ironic, thereby rescuing Shakespeare from the charge of male chauvinism. Hence, what has always seemed a raucously funny and full-blooded comedy has emerged as a scathing indictment of man's oppression of woman and a "mockery" of precisely those characters in whom audiences have long delighted. The revisionist procedure is irresistible: first you make Shakespeare a "sexist," then, by the miracle of imagined irony, you make him an "anti-sexist" and a leader in the battle against male supremacy.

Unfortunately, this approach requires a new ending for the play. As the reader will remember, *The Taming of the Shrew* closes with Katherine—once a sour nag, now, thanks to Petruchio's energetic cure, a spirited and loving wife—lecturing the other wives on a woman's duty to her husband. Mr. Grossman implicitly understands that it is crucial to the arguments of the Coalition for an Ironic Shakespeare that this speech be proved the very opposite of what it seems: the strong and beautifully expressed declaration of a woman who through love has come into her own. Recent directors have therefore tried to undercut the speech's natural beauties—some by having their Katherines deliver it sarcastically or in a brainwashed-sounding monotone, others by "ironic" staging. Charles Marowitz went so far as to bring out Katherine wearing the garment of a mental institution. (By much the same tricks was *Henry V*, long enjoyed as a patriotic rouser, transformed into a withering indictment of war and imperialism.)

Such flattening for the sake of ideology makes for a very pale and gutless sliver of the play Shakespeare wrote, if not for downright lies. I am sorry that Mr. Grossman is willing to pay such a high artistic price in the name of a false "egalitarianism."

Mr. Grossman's larger point concerns the question of equating Shakespeare with his characters. In his opinion, at the core of Shakespeare's plays is "the absence of a . . . core," and therein lies their greatness. Mr. Grossman faults me for attributing "values" (such as love of God or country) to Shakespeare, in whose works he finds only rich and multifarious neutralism and a semi-divine relativism. This is a lot of twaddle livened by a little sense.

It is true that it is one of Shakespeare's chief gifts as a playwright to present compellingly every man's side. It was a habit instilled in him by a Tudor grammar school's rhetorical training in the writing of *controversiae* and guided by Shakespeare's own larger instinct for locating his plays in those centers of human character and situation which provoke a powerful—and divided—response: the deposing of a rightful king, the forfeiting of virtue for a brother's life, the assassination of a dictator. This ability to voice convincingly every side of a vexed issue and yet always to invite response and disagreement from his audience; this capacity to make us feel both for Richard II and for his usurper Bolingbroke, for Henry VI and for his murderer Richard II, is a feature of that abounding humanity that makes Shakespeare the greatest of all poets. Through love, he understands all, and through understanding, forgives.

But to say that Shakespeare loves the sinner is not to say that he fails to abhor the sin. Although Shakespeare illuminates feelingly the succession of motives and apprehensions behind every point of view and every act, we are never in doubt as to where a play's moral center lies. Indeed, Shakespeare's very choice of dramatic subject matter is a moral choice, bearing with it necessary judgments. We pity Macbeth and admire his endurance while seeing that regicide is a crime against nature; we delight in Antony while learning that a man who forsakes his country for an unlawful love loses his very soul.

The history of Shakespeare criticism has proved that those who single out characters as embodiments of the playwright's own true sentiments (as, for instance, in the 19th century Ulysses in *Troilus and Cressida* was thought to be) look pretty foolish in a few decades' time. But whether or not Petruchio speaks for Shakespeare is, really, a question of little concern. To judge from Petruchio's enduring power to delight an audience and to inflame critical passions, I would guess that Shakespeare put a good deal into him, and got a lot out of him in return.

Economics

To the Editor of Commentary:

I agree with much that Melville J. Ulmer left unsaid in his "Economics in Decline" [November 1984]. I wish, however, to solicit one fact: who are the notable authorities in economics who believe that "boosts in the minimum wage help to reduce poverty"?

George J. Stigler
Director, Center for the Study
of the Economy and the State
University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . One branch of economics, namely, the theory of price, has been proved at least partially acceptable under empirical scrutiny, despite employing such "unreal" premises as the existence of omniscient entrepreneurs, perfect competition, and (horrors!) equilibrium. This theory, or rather group of related theories, deals with the relationship among prices, costs, and revenues or utilities, affecting firms and consumers under conditions of competition, monopoly, and oligopoly.

Though I have not personally reviewed the relevant studies, I have been assured by an economist that at least some of the lower-level theorems of this branch of economics have been confirmed through empirical statistical investigation. Thus, despite the fact that the theory contains postulates that are demonstrably false, it is nonetheless true that from false premises true conclusions can be validly derived, as has been true throughout the history of science. There have been many useful theories in physics that speak of idealized entities such as frictionless bodies or ideal gases that have no place in reality but nonetheless often provide reasonably good approximations when applied in the laboratory.

The above having been said, I must hastily add that this (partial)

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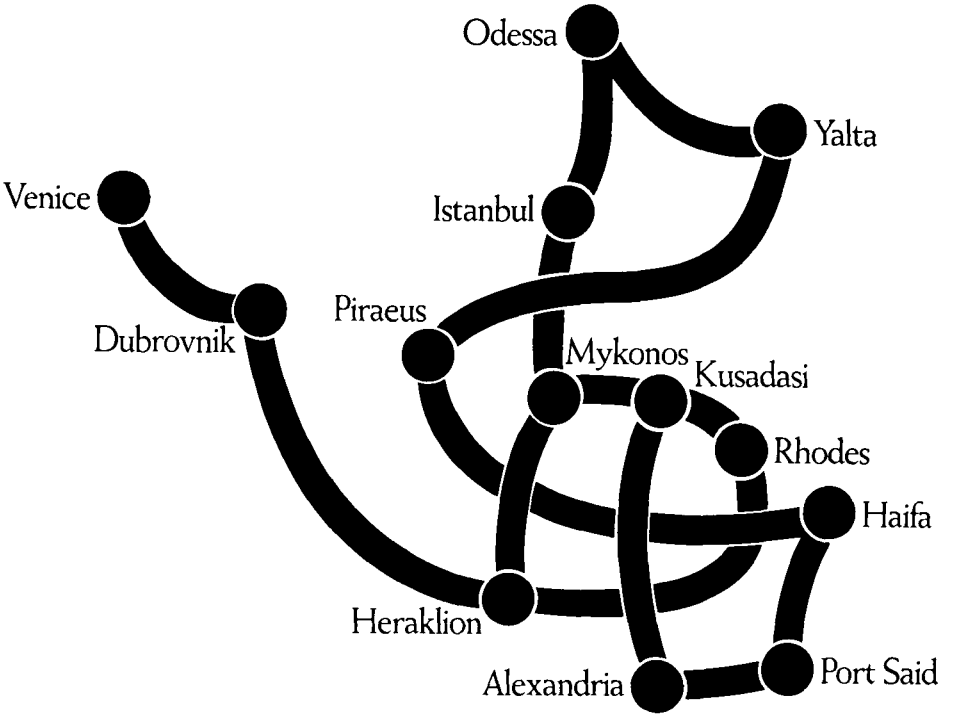

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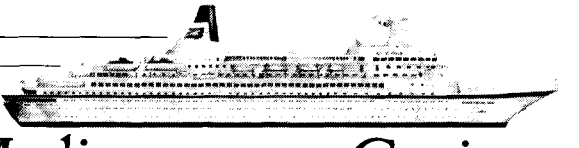

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success of microeconomics in applying the physicist's method of idealized entities is perhaps the worst thing that could have happened to the discipline of economics as a whole. As Mr. Ulmer correctly points out, mainstream economists are so enamored of mathematical elegance that they have applied the techniques of price theory to domains where they apparently do not work. After all, there is no guarantee that an approach that is successful in one area of a subject will apply to another, in this case macroeconomics, where the nature of the problems and conditions differ drastically. . . .

STAN KOUTOUZOS
Sunnyside, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I greatly enjoyed Melville J. Ulmer's "Economics in Decline." Mr. Ulmer rightly ridicules the economics profession for its persistently false predictions, noting that "the consensus of leading forecasters" has missed virtually every major economic turning point since 1974-75. Yet one new school of economists which Mr. Ulmer hardly mentions—namely, the supply-siders—has correctly forecast all those same events. . . . The supply-side model is spelled out in greater detail than can be recapitulated here in such books as Jude Wanniski's *How the World Works* and George Gilder's *Wealth and Poverty*. Essentially, though, this model takes account of two variables scorned by other, "demand-side" economists.

First, supply-siders believe in the crucial incentive effects of marginal tax rates. Thus, when evaluating a tax cut, they concentrate on its effects on potential suppliers (everyone in the economy) rather than on such aggregate demand forces as the federal deficit. This general point is illustrated by the famous Laffer Curve, a graphic depiction of the truism that when taxes reach a sufficiently high level, a cut in the tax rate, by greatly enhancing incentives, can bring in more revenue. (This will balance the budget, if—please note the if—government spending is held in check. But real supply-siders know that you need never balance the budget if you have an honest currency to keep interest rates down.)

Second, most supply-siders watch the price of gold to evaluate whether the Federal Reserve's monetary policy is too loose, too tight, or about right. It will be "right" when the gold price remains stable over a long period of time, indicating that the value of money is being held steady. By protecting the value of existing and potential property, a stable currency, like tax cuts, enhances incentives for "suppliers" to supply.

Whether or not one likes the policy implications of this model, it has in fact predicted well. Consider the very events which, Mr. Ulmer correctly notes, "most economists" failed to foresee.

1. The 1974-75 recession: at a conference held by the American Enterprise Institute in May 1975, Robert Mundell astonished most of his colleagues by predicting that unemployment would reach close to 10 percent by December. The rising price of gold, . . . Mundell said, had forced taxpayers into higher brackets and thus established a tremendous drag on the economy. Meanwhile, the Federal Reserve's solution, which in 1974-75 meant a sharp reduction in the price of gold, was a classic example of deflation, squeezing debtors and slowing down the economy. As a result of these forces, Mundell predicted a decade of higher inflation and unemployment, as clumsy demand-side fiscal and monetary policies alternately tried to "heat up" and then "cool down" the economy.

Mundell's views were reported in a feature by Jude Wanniski in the *Wall Street Journal*. Wanniski said that the solution to this crunch was a substantial cut in marginal tax rates combined with a stabilization of the gold price. In the event, the Ford and then Carter administrations followed neither piece of advice, and the result was the stagflation predicted by Mundell. . . .

2. The non-recessions of 1978 and 1979: as the Federal Reserve squeezing of 1974-75 ended, the price of gold began a sustained rise to the $800 mark by late 1979. Wanniski regularly warned . . . that higher inflation, not a recession, would be the first result of the Federal Reserve's five-year failure to stabilize the value of the dollar. . . .

3. The recession of 1981-82: during the spring and summer of 1981, monetarists screamed that money growth was too fast and erratic, and said that unless the Federal Reserve raised interest rates, inflation would again surge. The conventional wisdom was that a drastic tightening was needed to make up for the Kemp tax cut. Many Keynesians, meanwhile, said that the tax cuts would be inflationary because they would result in an increase in the federal deficit. . . . Supply-siders, however, again noticed the falling price of gold, down almost 50 percent in less than one year, heading toward $300 in 1981-82 from its $800 high in 1979. They also noted that the personal tax-rate cuts, though enacted in August 1981, would not cause any actual tax relief until 1983.

Thus in the spring of 1981 Jude Wanniski warned of looming clouds over the expansion of the first two quarters. . . . Jack Kemp, in his famous "Dunkirk Report" memo to the President in November 1981, warned that delaying the tax cuts, the strategy ultimately adopted by Reagan, would drastically slow down the economy. . . .

By the spring of 1982, supply-siders were uniformly predicting a sluggish economy, whereas leading business publications were trumpeting the beginning of the recovery. David Stockman predicted 4-percent growth for 1982 and the University of Chicago Business School saw "smooth sailing," with unemployment ending at 8.5 percent. *Time* magazine's board of economists—Alan Greenspan, Martin Feldstein, Walter Heller, and the other "usual suspects"—said, "The new year will start in recession, but growth should pick up later."

In the event, as Mr. Ulmer notes, these predictions were off the mark, and the supply-side fears about monetary policy and the dilution of the tax cuts were borne out.

4. The 1983-84 expansion: as the 1982 recession deepened, the Federal Reserve finally ended its squeeze on the economy. Beginning in August 1982, it lowered interest rates, letting the price of gold rise back toward $450 from its dip to $300. The Federal Reserve then quickly stabilized, keeping gold close to $425 for almost two years. With the first true tax cuts finally on the way in 1983, the supply-siders jumped for joy. Jude Wanniski in the New York *Times* wrote of the "roaring '80s"; George Gilder echoed his relief in the *Wall Street Journal* a few weeks later.

By contrast, monetarists, using money-supply figures rather than the price of gold to evaluate the easing of the Federal Reserve, said

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that the recovery would quickly be overwhelmed by drastic inflation. As the Federal Reserve continued to expand the money supply into 1983, Milton Friedman predicted that inflation might reach 15 percent in 1983-84. Other economists, still hyponotized by the deficit, were not as frightened by the easing, but nevertheless predicted sluggish growth. . . . Yet supply-side forecasts, all available in print, were close to the actual growth track of 6.5 percent. . . .

One thing did worry the supply-siders in early 1984, namely, the falling price of gold. . . . By last summer, the supply-side fear was coming true. Not only did the Federal Reserve fail to make the crucial correction to keep gold above $400; its too-high interest rates drove gold down to $325 by the summer. Thus, supply-siders suggested that there would be a slowdown beginning in the fall of 1984 —a slowdown they said would turn into a recession for 1985 if the Federal Reserve did not stop. . . .

The surprising accuracy of these and similar supply-side forecasts has now caught the eye of many in the general press. *Time* this spring noted that, true to supply-side predictions, the Reagan tax cut had not resulted in a shift of the tax burden toward the poor, but had instead lightened the burden on lower-income Americans while bringing in increased payments from the wealthy. Similarly, this fall . . . *Newsweek* conceded that "the supply-siders may be right."...

No forecasting model is perfect, but on the basis of the last ten years, it would seem that supply-side economics may indeed be right. . . .

GREGORY A. FOSSEDAL
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Melville J. Ulmer is right about the decline of economics. As a matter of fact, economics has reached a stage of very deep crisis. Mr. Ulmer attributes this decline to three major flaws: "nearly exclusive reliance on deductive reasoning; a preoccupation with the static concept of equilibrium; and the oversimplifications required to match actual data with mathematical abstractions."

But those flaws are not the prime cause of the decline. They are actually merely consequences of what the economist Joan Robinson has called "economists aping natural scientists." Economists have borrowed the methods of natural scientists and applied them to a completely different system—a human system. Physicists, for example, study the properties and interactions of matter and energy and assume, as their working hypothesis, that what happens in this relationship has to happen and will always happen; hence the predictability of natural science. They further assume that all phenomena can be quantified and that the motion in this system proceeds from one equilibrium to the next.

While aping natural scientists, economists forget that the economy is the result of human thought and is therefore *sui generis*. Consequently, the study of such a system must result in a discipline, or a science, that is also *sui generis*. Human creativity cannot be forecast or quantified or forced into the Procrustean bed of sophisticated mathematical formulas. Moreover, a system based on creativity must end in permanent disequilibrium.

A scientific discipline can develop only if the proper terms of reference, the proper *Fragestellung*, are formulated. Such terms must derive from a specific subject matter, and in my view this has already been posited by Adam Smith, who asked the question, "What is the source of the wealth of a nation and how can it be maximized?" Of course, the answer to this question will differ in different times and places, which means that we have to deal with historical categories and locate economics within a historical framework. Unfortunately, the followers of Adam Smith have thrown his most important contribution overboard; they dwell on the answers he derived from the study of an economy that, compared to our own, was underdeveloped. All the concepts that Smith used—labor, money, credit, free enterprise, etc.—have changed over time. . . .

Smith attempted to discover the source of a nation's wealth. . . . Marx, on the other hand, asked, "What is the source of impoverishment, of 'immiseration'?" His followers not only built on Marx's theory, they even succeeded in bringing about further "immiseration." Our task today is to pose Smith's question again and develop a truly scientific economics that will provide the answers. . . .

EUGEN LOEBL
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Melville J. Ulmer should have provided proper citations for the articles and publications he discusses as well as documentary proof for his assertions. . . . For example, he does not identify the "six articles dwelling delightedly on [the] professional embarrassment" of economic forecasters. Nor does he give references for the articles by James Gibson and Charles Wolf, Jr. from which he quotes. Without such references I cannot check the authenticity of his remarks. . . .

Mr. Ulmer focuses narrowly on economic models, which represent a separate field of analysis. It has been well known since the early 70's that large econometric models are flawed with respect to short-run forecasting. But the usefulness of these models extends beyond short-run predictions of GNP. Mr. Ulmer emphasizes the negative, and does not mention the positive contributions of econometrics.

An example of Mr. Ulmer's lack of understanding and fallible philosophical foundation is his ludicrous comment that "the proof of knowledge lies in prediction." His inaccurate references to Galileo and Einstein actually demonstrate the reverse of his thesis. Galileo could not have predicted the final speed of his missile dropped from the tower; air currents, wind friction, and other exogenous factors prevented accurate prediction. Similarly, Einstein was critical of Galileo and Newton . . . and he showed the lack of predictive power of Newtonian mechanics.

Against the unverified comments of Mr. Ulmer I would place the fact that the marketplace subscribes to economic predictions. For all their errors, these predictions improve yearly, and are the best available tool for predicting the future and understanding the past. Corporate men of affairs and policy-makers regularly ask for advice from economists. . . .

The question of fiscal policy versus monetary policy similarly reveals Mr. Ulmer's lack of understanding. He fails to note that every fiscal policy has to have a monetary policy associated with it. Every change in federal spending requires a change in funding by the federal government; hence, a monetary policy. Thus, even to suggest that there is a conflict is to mislead the reader. . . .

What Mr. Ulmer should be saying is that economic prediction is

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inherently uncertain. As an economist myself, I can tell Mr. Ulmer that we make predictions based upon our analysis of historical relationships, but these relationships continue to change. For example, we have studied the impact of fiscal and monetary policy primarily during periods when interest rates, and the real interest rate (interest minus inflation), were much lower than today. We can only surmise the impact of large increases in interest rates. We have no historical basis from which to predict economic events when real interest rates exceed 4 percent for a substantial period of time. We generally make a linear approximation; but such approaches are not cited as definitive by any model-builder. We use the best tools that we have been able to develop in order to suggest the best course of action. This is decision-making under uncertainty.

Mr. Ulmer appears to be an economist of the old school, relatively unversed in modern techniques. He would then have a vested interest in denying the remarkable improvement in economic analysis that has occurred in the last thirty years. . . . Does Mr. Ulmer's approach give us a better alternative, with better predictive power? . . . Of course not. . . .

Mr. Ulmer's critique reminds me of similar polemics by economists who are not in the mainstream of economics. They are not working with policy-makers, attempting to resolve problems. They are not constructing models and trying to assist in the development of policy. Rather, they sit in an outdated ivory tower taking pot shots with an outdated musket, perhaps writing polemical essays.

JERALD H. UDINSKY
President, Financial & Statistical Economists
Oakland, California

MELVILLE J. ULMER writes:

I fear that Stan Koutouzos's friend in the economics profession may have misled him, though only inadvertently. The truly fruitful contributions of deductive price theory, to which his friend referred, mostly *predated* the modern methodological decline described in my article, and stemmed directly or indirectly from the masterwork of Alfred Marshall, *Principles of Economics* (1890). There is of course nothing inherently wrong in the use of mathematics or of deductive reasoning in general in the social sciences. What is wrong is the misapplication of these tools, during the last thirty years or so, without regard for empirical obligations or for the dynamic character of social behavior.

Marshall's productive reasoning, by illustration, helps to clarify a related confusion in Mr. Koutouzos's letter. Assumptions that capture some critical element of the truth—if only as limiting cases or idealizations—may prove heuristically useful if their deductive consequences are testable. Those criteria of qualified realism and testability were faithfully met in Marshall's work, though not in many contemporary models. On the other hand, and contrary to Mr. Koutouzos's perhaps hastily careless assertion, *thoroughly* false premises lead only to thoroughly false conclusions, examples of which in recent economic work are all too depressingly familiar.

George J. Stigler's single question, I feel sure, reflects his own skepticism that any large number of economists can be found who publicly favor the legal minimum wage, first established by the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. He is right. The great majority agree with him, as I do, that the minimum wage most likely yields considerably more harm than good. Indeed, despite passionate conflicts on other matters, most in the profession accept this and similar lessons drawn from the neoclassical price theory of Alfred Marshall (mentioned above and also in my article), especially as later amended by George Stigler himself, Milton Friedman, Edward Chamberlin, and Joan Robinson.

At any rate, the old reliable price theory proves that an effective minimum wage can be won only at the cost of a probably large increase in imposed unemployment. The "proof," however, is not general enough to cover all possible cases. If the demand for unskilled labor is *inelastic* in the range of the established minimum, the resulting loss of jobs may be insignificantly small while the gain in income for the poor may be very large. Further, if competition among the *buyers* of unskilled labor is imperfect ("monopsonistic" is the technical term), then once again the loss in jobs resulting from a legalized minimum wage would be extremely small, perhaps even zero. These possibilities leave judgmental loopholes for the relatively few economists who favor the minimum wage. For a list of their names, including those who recently testified on the subject before Congress, Mr. Stigler would be best advised to consult the most authoritative source of all, Rudolph Oswald, chief economist of the AFL-CIO.

My thanks to Gregory A. Fossedal for his appreciation of my article and for his supplementary account of the recent forecasting successes of the small branch of economic iconoclasts loosely identified as supply-siders. Although I have commented on their successes elsewhere (for example in "Deficit Thinking," COMMENTARY, June 1984), I did not judge that extensive discussion was warranted in "Economics in Decline." The principal theme of that article was the deterioration of *mainstream* economics, its failure to produce verifiable new knowledge in the last generation, and its ideological neglect of earlier truths. Supply-siders are among the handful of dissidents, far overshadowed in number and professional influence by the conventional majority.

At the same time, it is well to note that the usefulness of supply-siders has been in resurrecting old truths rather than in producing new knowledge. As Mr. Fossedal properly observes, the Laffer Curve is simply a truism, the essence of which was understood as far back as Smith and Ricardo. Equally familiar in the history of economic thought are the relationships between pecuniary incentives and economic growth and between growth and the federal budget, though these are neglected or forgotten by ideologues of the liberal-Left. The great service of supply-siders has been in providing provocative reminders of these truths.

Obviously, though, old ideas are not necessarily true, and often, as in economics, may remain in that never-never land where neither validity nor falsity is firmly established. The economic role of gold, upon which Mr. Fossedal comments, is in the latter category. Thus, on quite different grounds from Robert Mundell's, I predicted the coming of stagflation in a book published in 1969, *The Welfare State: U.S.A.*

Eugen Loebl's observation that economists have—to their grief—tried to "ape" the methods of the physical sciences is obviously true,

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and in fact well known. Whether this obsessive propensity to copy is the *prime* cause of the decline in modern economics is more debatable. I described more specific and I believe more fundamental reasons for the profession's present disarray.

With the ferocity of a tigress guarding her young, Jerald H. Udinsky leaps at my professional throat in protection of—his professional interests? As the proprietor of a West Coast organization selling financial advice, he is particularly riled by my extended references to the abysmal record of economic and financial forecasts. One possible reaction would have been to seek evidence that I was wrong, but he knew that would have been futile. Another would have been to keep quiet, but he clearly was not that wise. Instead, he chose—through mere unsubstantiated assertion—to attack me personally, even hinting that I invented my sources, including names of articles and authors.

Well, I can at least prove that I did not invent sources. Here in full are the supporting citations for the popular publications in which Mr. Udinsky appears most interested: "Pin a Tail on the Forecasts," by Charles Wolf, Jr., New York *Times*, June 30, 1984; "Frustrations of Forecasters," by Robert D. Hershey, Jr., New York *Times*, July 2, 1984; "Once Proud Economic Forecasters Are Writhing in Confusion," by James Gibson, Washington *Post*, July 28, 1982; "Is It Time to Abolish the Congressional Budget Office?," by Warren T. Brookes, *Human Events*, June 16, 1984; "Why Should Anyone Believe Henry Kaufman?," by Warren T. Brookes, *Human Events*, June 9, 1984; and "The Track Record of Economic Forecasts," by Stephen K. McNees and John Ries, *New England Economic Review*, November-December 1983. For further information Mr. Udinsky might refer to the annual record of forecasts in the *NBER Digest*, published by the National Bureau of Economic Research, and to the intriguing account of muffed forecasts by policy-makers contained in *The Supply-Side Revolution* by Paul Craig Roberts.

On some of the other points he muddily raises, Mr. Udinsky may find it educational to read the following: *Beyond Positive Economics: Dream and Reality*, by Jack Wiseman (Institute for Research in the Social Sciences, University of York, England); *Essays in Positive Economics*, by Milton Friedman; *Logic Without Metaphysics*, by Ernest Nagel; and *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, by Karl R. Popper.

Words on Music

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I think that Jonathan D. Sarna [Letters from Readers, January] is a bit confused. Yes, the musical notation for *Adon Olam* was first published in the *Occident* in 1894. And yes, Salamone Rossi's *Adon Olam was* first published in Venice in the first half of the 17th century. But we are talking about two completely different pieces of music; true, they share the same text, but they are nonetheless *different* hymns, with different music, discrete unto themselves. It is worth noting that Rossi, who was known to the Court of Mantua as "*Ebreo*," "the Jew," composed thirty-two madrigal-like gems for the synagogue, of which *Adon Olam* is one; he is an important figure in the history of music. Among other things, Rossi was an inventor of the trio sonata, a reigning musical form in Western Europe for the next hundred years.

JEROME A. CHANES
National Jewish Community
Relations Advisory Council
New York City

JONATHAN D. SARNA writes:

Jerome A. Chanes is quite correct about Salamone Rossi, but as far as the *Occident*—the original subject of this exchange—I am afraid that it is he who is confused. The *Occident* had long since ceased publication in 1894. Half a century earlier, it did publish the musical notation for *Adon Olam*, but whether it was the first to do so still seems to me quite dubious. Does it matter?

Life in the East

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Arch Puddington's excellent article, "Totalitarianism Today" [December 1984], raised many important points which cannot be repeated often enough. We have become so accustomed to thinking of Communist rulers as decrepit and inefficient that we tend to forget that there is one area in which they are truly unrivaled: namely, what Mr. Puddington calls "regulating the most mundane details of an individual's existence." . . .

This is why I feel uneasy when Mr. Puddington characterizes the present-day manifestations of totalitarianism in Eastern Europe as "softer" than in previous years. The characterization would seem to imply some degree of intentionally benign loosening of restrictions. Indeed, some might even take it as a sign of weakness due to aging. Unfortunately, the opposite is true: the apparent "softening" is a sign of unprecedented strength.

Mr. Puddington gives an indication of this himself when he quotes Lenin's description of ideal behavior in Communist society:

> When all have learned to manage... the escape from this national accounting and control will inevitably become so increasingly difficult, such a rare exception, and will probably be accompanied by such quick punishment . . . that soon the necessity of observing the simple, fundamental rules of everyday social life in common will have become a habit.

I am afraid that this ideal has almost been reached in the Soviet Union, so that with its power over the minds and actions of its citizens securely consolidated, the state can do without "more dramatic and brutal manifestations" of its power.

All my fellow refugees from Communist countries have their favorite stories about the bizarre world we left behind. One of mine is about the relentless reediting of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* in the 40's and 50's. Whenever yesterday's revolutionary hero was declared to be today's enemy of the people and was dealt the "full strength of socialist justice," his name and life history had to be deleted from the encyclopedia. A new page would then be printed with some innocent entry (indeed, a biologist friend of mine claimed that a single stroke of the censor's pen thus created a new genus of frog, heretofore unknown to science). The new page would be mailed to all owners of the encyclopedia with instructions to paste it on top of the old page, thus obliterating the offensive entry. There is nothing surprising in the fact that the government would do something like this: after all, rewriting history is the most fundamental principle of the Communist world order. But it is truly mind-boggling

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that thousands of Soviet citizens in the supposed privacy of their homes scrupulously and conscientiously carried out these instructions.

My parents were of the first generation that was born and raised after the revolution: their formative years were spent in a Russia terrorized by Stalin; all their lives, their predominant emotion was mortal fear. My generation had a very different experience: the state did not come down on us like a ton of bricks for the slightest offense. But when I stopped to reflect on this during the twenty-four years I spent in the Soviet Union, I was sickened by its implications. The state trusted us. We were those ideal citizens Lenin dreamed of: the state's "fundamental rules" had become our "habits." We could be trusted, for example, to vote unanimously for moving Soviet tanks into Czechoslovakia: not out of fear (as our parents would have done), but simply as a matter of habit, because disobedience would not even have occurred to us. Our leaders were right, too. All of six people (out of 250 million) came to Red Square to protest this shameful act. As for the rest of us, they had us exactly where they wanted us. The totalitarians have won: they have devoured the soul of the nation. . . .

LENA MANDEL
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I would like to express my appreciation for your publication of Arch Puddington's "Totalitarianism Today." I am a twelfth-grade government teacher who attempts to teach students about the "real world" distinctions among democratic, totalitarian, and authoritarian governments. Mr. Puddington's article will be invaluable in creating lessons dealing with these distinctions.

MICHAEL M. YELL
Holdingford, Minnesota

ARCH PUDDINGTON writes:

I would like to thank Lena Mandel and Michael M. Yell for their generous comments. Lena Mandel is quite correct: the insidiousness of Communist regimes stems from their ability, once power has been consolidated and "class enemies" dealt with, to manipulate and coerce their societies without the necessity of resorting to mass terror. I would, however, disagree with the despairing conclusion that the "totalitarians have won." Resistance, in varying forms and degrees, exists wherever the Communist system prevails. The best example, of course, is the fact of Solidarity's impressive ability to survive for more than three years after the declaration of martial law. While Communist regimes have been compelled to put down uprisings on a number of past occasions, never previously have Communist rulers been unable to regain absolute party-state dominance. There are, moreover, a number of developments within the Communist world which will further complicate the state's ability to control the people. These include a better-educated populace with greater access to non-Communist sources of information, the rejection of Communism by the younger generation, and the inevitable changes in Communist economic systems. To be sure, Communism has proved itself ingenious at anticipating and smothering potentially troublesome currents within the societies it controls. And, in Europe at least, the Red Army remains the ultimate guarantor of Communist rule. Nevertheless, we in the West would be committing a serious error if we were to ignore the social, economic, and political trends which threaten the stability of the Communist system. We should, as well, actively (though prudently) support those engaged in the resistance struggle, whether they are Jewish refuseniks, Catholic clergymen, intellectual dissidents, or embattled trade-unionists. As these people have repeatedly stressed, it is the watchful eye of the West which prevents their oppressors from crushing them with impunity.

Vargas Llosa

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Roger Kaplan's intelligent and insightful article, "Beyond Magic Realism" [December 1984], is praiseworthy for many reasons, among which I would mention his attempt to demystify Gabriel García Márquez's baroque empire of "committed" metaphors. Mario Vargas Llosa, the subject of the article, represents the opposite of Márquez's aesthetic and political creed. Vargas Llosa's novel, *The War of the End of the World*, is an outstanding inquiry into . . . apocalyptic leftist radicalism, the literary answer to basic political dilemmas in contemporary Latin America. As Mr. Kaplan accurately points out, Vargas Llosa is among the few Latin American intellectuals who have invested their hopes in liberal democracy "while denouncing the bigotry of those who think Latin countries must choose between Marxist utopianism and rightist dictatorship."

My comments on Mr. Kaplan's welcome contribution are inspired by the deep impression produced by Vargas Llosa's most recent novel, *Historia de Mayta* ("The Story of Mayta," Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1984), an extraordinary attempt to explore the tormented psychology of Latin American leftism. . . .

Vargas Llosa's book . . . locates the origin of the present violence in Peru (the offensive of the Maoist-Pol Potist *Sendero Luminoso*) in the unfulfilled radical utopias of the late 50's and early 60's. . . . The hero is the Trotskyist Mayta. . . . As Vargas Llosa puts it, Mayta's personality and story are like "a radiograph of Peruvian unhappiness." Mayta's failure symbolizes the agony of Latin American leftists, prisoners of their eschatological dreams and mythological projections. They have always been obsessed with revolution ("for Mayta the sole important topic was revolution") and can survive only through hatred, frustration, and resentment of the establishment. The consciousness of injustice, the horror they feel at seeing the miserable slums, the stupidity of the ruling oligarchy—all these Latin American realities have become the rationale for violent upheavals, particularly in the aftermath of the Cuban revolution. . . .

Mayta's story offers Vargas Llosa the chance to meditate on the contradictions of revolutionary commitment, the hypocrisy of radical "vanguards," the persistence of an inquisitorial tradition in the behavior of Latin American leftists. . . . Vargas Llosa's target is the malignant, Byzantine factionalism of the Left, its unreconstructed belief that violence can bring about justice and happiness. . . . Vargas Llosa's latest novel can therefore be read as an autopsy of lethal ideologies, a warning to those who refuse to see how "idealism" and Jacobin fanaticism can turn history into a nightmare. . . .

VLADIMIR TISMANEANU
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Israel's Economic Crisis: What Israel Must Do

Stuart E. Eizenstat

THIS year a new chapter will be written in the history of the unique relationship between America and Israel, one of the world's largest democracies and one of its smallest —a chapter which will see the initiation of even closer and more intimate ties or the possible unleashing of a new round of bitterness and recrimination. Israel, by seeking $800 million in emergency assistance for U.S. Fiscal Year (USFY) 1985, on top of the $2.6 billion in military and economic aid already being supplied this year, and $4.05 billion for USFY 1986, has not only asked for more money than ever before, and at a time of budgetary restraint in this country, but has put the United States in a position to do something quite unprecedented: namely, to place economic conditions on its foreign aid.

The U.S. has occasionally conditioned foreign assistance on considerations such as compliance with human rights (as with El Salvador during the Reagan administration and certain other Latin American nations during the Carter administration), but not on the carrying out of internal economic reforms by the recipient nation. Yet this is what the Reagan administration will effectively do, in deed if not in word, if it grants the major increase in U.S. funds that Israel seeks. In so doing it will replicate the approach of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which provides financial assistance and supervision to Third World nations in economic duress, on the condition that the recipient nations undertake difficult and often painful internal programs of economic adjustment.

How have Israel and the United States come to this point—a point which seems to promise a new and still undefined change in their evolving relationship?

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I

BETWEEN 1946 and 1971, total U.S. aid to Israel averaged slightly more than $60 million per year for a total of $1.5 billion overall, of which $1.35 billion was economic and only $162 million was military in nature. All the military aid and all but $370 million of the economic aid took the form of loans rather than grants.

Starting in 1961 a much deeper and closer relation began to develop between the U.S. and Israel, maturing into a warmth and mutual political understanding not seen during the Eisenhower years (which were punctuated by U.S. pressure on Israel to withdraw unilaterally from Suez without commensurate Egyptian concessions). President John F. Kennedy signaled the deepening relationship with his historic decision to break the arms embargo which had been in force since 1948 and to sell Hawk anti-aircraft missiles to Israel. While pains were taken to describe these missiles as purely defensive, the ice had been broken. And what Kennedy began, President Lyndon Johnson moved forward with giant, Texas-sized strides.

But it was really with the Yom Kippur War of 1973 and thereafter that U.S. military and economic assistance began to assume large and predictable levels. For USFY 1973, before the war, Israel received $417 million in U.S. assistance; this figure, while well above the levels of the 1950's and early 1960's, pales in comparison with what followed. As a student of the subject has described it, "Late in 1973, Congress voted an emergency appropriation of $2.2 billion to Israel, including a $1.5 billion grant in military aid. So began the new era."*

Between 1974 and 1981, total U.S. aid to Israel amounted to $18 billion—twelve times more than the country had received from 1948 to 1973, a period three-and-one-half times as long. Of this amount, $12.8 billion was for military assistance and $5.2 billion for economic aid. The 1970's also witnessed a variety of foreign-aid concessions to

* Kenneth Jacobson, *U.S. Aid to the Middle East: A Look Back, A Look Ahead*, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith (January 1983).

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help Israel and to strengthen the bilateral relationship. To enumerate: since 1974, Israel has been allowed to pay for its U.S. weapons purchases in installments, something many countries may not do; whereas foreign countries must normally spend their grant and loan money proportionately, Israel is authorized to spend all of its U.S. grants before using its loan money; since 1975, all of Israel's economic aid has been provided by direct cash transfer rather than being earmarked for specific projects or purposes, thus giving Israel more discretion in using its aid; since 1979, Israel has been able to bid on U.S. defense contracts for overseas projects; and Israel is permitted to reduce the costs of weapons by offset arrangements under which it asks U.S. defense contractors selling to Israel to buy Israeli goods in return.*

The Carter years saw yet another advance in the bilateral relationship. While there were periods of tension between President Carter and Prime Minister Begin, aid levels continued to rise. And in 1980, President Carter negotiated a fifteen-year agreement to guarantee Israel's oil supply in the event of a cutoff—the only such agreement the U.S. has extended to any country.

With the advent of the Reagan administration, another change occurred: Israel was no longer seen as simply a moral obligation for the U.S., or a burden to be balanced against America's interest in the Arab world. It came to be viewed by significant elements of the Reagan administration (including the President himself and each of his Secretaries of State) as a strategic asset. Indeed, after a brief, ill-fated effort early in the Reagan first term to form a strategic alliance not just with Israel but with Western-oriented Arab countries as well, Israel came to be accorded virtually the same privileges as America's closest allies. In 1981 a historic Memorandum of Understanding was signed in which, for the first time, the U.S. publicly noted the "mutual security relationship which exists between the two nations" and joined with Israel in strategic cooperation to deter "the threat to peace and security of the region caused by the Soviet Union or Soviet-controlled forces from outside the region introduced into the region."

In addition to the Memorandum of Understanding, other positive steps were taken. Israel was permitted to use U.S. funds, now totaling $900 million, to develop the Lavi fighter, even though it might compete with a U.S.-made fighter. (Normally, U.S. foreign aid must be used to buy weapons and services from the U.S.) Israel was given greater access to U.S. defense procurement. And joint U.S.-Israeli military exercises were instituted and have been performed.

Improvement could also be measured in increases in U.S. military and economic aid, from $1.7 billion in 1977 to $2.6 billion in 1985. Equally important, in 1984 all loans were converted to grants, both for military and economic assistance, in order to help relieve Israel of its future foreign-debt obligations. Beginning with USFY 1984, Israel has gotten all of its economic aid at the beginning of the year, rather than in quarterly payments like most nations. Finally, in 1984 the Senate passed the Inouye-Kasten-Cranston amendment which stipulates that Israel's assistance level in any fiscal year should never fall below the level of its debt repayments. Likewise in 1984, the Free Trade Agreement, the first such in U.S. history, was passed by large majorities in the House and Senate over substantial opposition from unions and various industries.

II

THE Israeli economy has manifested built-in structural problems since the earliest days of the state: wage indexation, inadequate monetary controls, huge budget demands for a new nation imbued with the ideal of gathering in exiles and reclaiming the desert. Yet despite these problems, and even despite the toll of repeated wars, for a long period of time the economy was able to hold its own—although not without developing some of the symptoms that have now assumed epidemic proportions.

Thus, from 1960 to 1965, GNP growth was 9.6 percent, inflation increased at less than 7 percent annually, and unemployment was only 3.8 percent. In 1964, however, with inflation running at nearly 10 percent, restrictive economic measures were instituted to reduce it. The result was Israel's most severe recession, with unemployment rising from 4 to 11 percent. From this recession, one can mark the beginning of Israel's net emigration and the social phenomenon of *yordim*—emigrants—leaving the Jewish homeland to live elsewhere, in particular the U.S.

But the restrictive measures worked: the recession dropped inflation back to the 6-percent range and reduced net imports from 22 percent of GNP in 1964 to 14 percent in 1966. The growth in GNP from 1967 to 1970 was 14.6 percent and inflation 2 percent. Unfortunately, inflation began to rise again as the economy continued to boom from 1970 to 1973, and was over 20 percent annually in 1973 before the Yom Kippur War.

The impact of the two wars of 1967 and 1973, the two oil-price shocks of 1973-74 and 1979-80, and the cost of the Egyptian peace treaty of 1977 added new burdens to the Israeli economy.

Much of the increased military funding from the U.S. after the two wars was in the form of loans, and this substantially aggravated Israel's foreign debt. (One-third of Israel's $23 billion foreign debt is owed to the U.S. on loans for weapons purchased since the 1973 war.) Defense spending, which in the early 1960's took less than 10 percent of Israel's GNP, increased by almost 10 percent of GNP after each of the two wars. It was especially after the 1973 war that Israel's military costs rose sharply, causing eco-

* *Congressional Quarterly*, December 29, 1984.

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nomic growth rates to decline from 10 percent per year to 2-3 percent per year. Between 1968 and 1973, defense expenditures and defense imports averaged 22 percent of Israel's GNP; in 1973, 1974, and 1975, they soared to 32.7 percent, 31 percent, and 34 percent.

In addition, the Israeli government, which from the beginning of the state had played a heavy role in the economy, was becoming an ever-larger employer—increasing its share from 23 percent of the labor force in 1973 to 30 percent in 1980—and thereby adding to the public cost.

The drain of the 1973 war, which cost Israel $12 billion, was accompanied by the OPEC oil shock in which prices quadrupled, imposing a particular burden on Israel since it has no indigenous oil supply and increasing the cost of imported oil by over 3 percent of Israel's GNP. The growth in GNP plummeted from 9 percent in the three years preceding the Yom Kippur War to only 2.6 percent from 1973 to 1977.

The budget deficit, which was less than 1 percent of GNP from 1960 to 1964 and only 5.2 percent from 1965 to 1967 (roughly the U.S. average), skyrocketed to 17.6 percent of GNP from 1974 to 1977, and the share of taxes rose from about 30 percent of GNP in 1965-67 to 45 percent between 1978 and 1980 (it is under 20 percent in the U.S.).

Government subsidies for goods and services and direct social-welfare payments increased rapidly in the early 1970's. The resulting deficits were "paid for" by printing more money (which increased inflation) and by borrowing (which added to Israel's foreign debt). Israel's domestic debt as a percentage of GNP more than doubled from 1973 to 1983.

As the 1970's progressed, the growth in Israel's GNP grew less quickly than the consumption rate, contributing to greater inflationary pressures and higher balance-of-payment deficits, as demand outstripped domestic supply.

All of this was exacerbated by the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty. The costs of the removal of Israeli forces and air bases from the Sinai were staggering, and only partially overcome by U.S. assistance provided by President Carter. The loss of the Egyptian oil fields further added to the burdens of Israeli society. So, too, the termination of West German reparations payments for the Holocaust removed another source of foreign capital to finance Israel's balance-of-payments deficit.

Despite the grim conditions, however, some progress was made. From 1974 to 1977, large reductions were effected in Israel's balance-of-payment deficit, and by the middle of 1977 inflation was at 30 percent per year, "lower than it had been for several years."* But then, just as Israel's economy seemed poised to recover from the lingering effects of the 1973 war and the oil-price shocks, a series of steps was taken which lifted the lid on inflation, from 71 percent in 1977-79, to 123 percent in 1979-83, to 402 percent in 1983-84.

A great gap was created between the amount Israel consumed and the amount it produced; from 1980 to 1983, Israel's consumption increased 21 percent but its production only 6 percent.† To fill this gap, Israel relied on gifts from Jews around the world, on borrowing from foreign banks and lenders, and on U.S. government loans and grants. The foreign-debt obligation grew so large—about $23 billion by the end of 1984, of which $11.5 billion was owed to the U.S. government—that servicing it alone took a large slice of the budget and 7-8 percent of the GNP. Israel's reserves for paying its foreign debt came dangerously close to the "red line."

The Begin government set out to close the production-consumption gap by trying, rightly, to liberalize the Israeli economy. At the end of 1979 capital controls were lifted, permitting Israelis to hold foreign currency and foreign bank accounts. At the same time, however, in an effort to help the lower middle class, which had formed the backbone of its electoral constituency, the Begin government also increased spending and ran an expansionary fiscal policy. The currency was devalued by 43 percent to help exports. Because these moves were not accompanied by cuts in spending and by a restrictive monetary policy, they ended by fueling inflation.

At the end of 1979, a new Finance Minister, Yigal Hurwitz, attempted to reverse the government's course by means of monetary restraint, subsidy cuts, reductions in government employment, and tax hikes. The results were predictable: the number of unemployed more than doubled, GNP fell, and real wages declined in the first half of 1980, but the balance of trade improved. Inflation, however, showed little improvement, and with the 1981 election nearing, Hurwitz and his austerity program were replaced after only nine months.

The policies of his successor as Finance Minister, Yoram Aridor, triggered still higher levels of inflation. Both before and after the 1981 election he encouraged a new wave of private consumption by reducing tariffs on imports and consumer goods while continuing government spending at a high rate. Indexing was made on a quarterly rather than a semi-annual basis and subsidies were increased on a variety of products. The real exchange rate appreciated and the balance-of-payments deficit increased.

The war in Lebanon further burdened Israel's budget and its economy, with the occupation of southern Lebanon costing $1.2 million a day.

To summarize: over the last seven years private consumption in Israel has grown 43 percent while the GNP has grown at only half the rate; the trade deficit has widened; real personal income

* Stanley Fischer, "Israeli Inflation and Indexation" (prepared for a conference on "Inflation and Indexation," Washington, D.C. December 6-8, 1984). I have relied on this work throughout.

† I am indebted to Professor Herbert Stein for this discussion of Israel's debt problem.

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has declined dramatically; foreign-currency reserves have fallen rapidly; and inflation has taken off into a triple-digit stratosphere, running by the end of 1984 well in excess of 400 percent on an annualized basis.

III

THERE can be no doubt that Israel needs additional help. The question is, what kind?

A strong argument can be made that as America's most reliable ally in the Middle East, and as a major strategic asset in one of the world's most unstable and yet critical regions, Israel should receive the additional assistance from the United States forthwith and without onerous conditions. If it is worth $33 billion per year for the U.S. to support NATO, is it not worth $4 billion to support Israel, particularly at a time of economic hardship? It is in America's national interest, after all, to have an economically viable Israel.

This argument is all the more compelling when it is recognized that some of Israel's economic burdens have been induced by its need to keep ahead of its increasingly well-armed Arab neighbors—many of whom are supplied by the U.S. itself. Israel, moreover, has faithfully repaid the assistance it has received over the years in the form of loans; indeed, Israel's annual interest repayments to the U.S. roughly equal the annual level of economic assistance from the U.S., and will exceed it by the late 1980's.

But while there is a strong bipartisan consensus that Israel is, in fact, one of America's most important and most dependable allies; while support for Israel in the U.S. public matches that for virtually any other foreign commitment; and while there is a desire both by the Reagan administration and large majorities in Congress to help Israel overcome its economic difficulties, the plain fact is that neither the President nor the Congress will provide anything approaching the massive increases that have been requested without significant economic changes in Israel itself. The administration will not impose a defined plan on the country, but neither will it support a major increase in aid or assent to any restructuring of Israel's debt until it sees an Israeli plan which it believes can end the economic crisis if put together with a U.S. aid package.

Nor will it be easy for Israel to circumvent the administration and achieve a no-strings-attached deal from Congress. It is true that Congress has traditionally been more favorably disposed to Israel than has the Presidency, and has constantly raised the levels of foreign assistance to Israel even above the Reagan administration's proposals. But there are strong grounds for believing that this year Congress will follow the administration's lead and condition any major increase in U.S. economic aid on an acceptable, Israeli-initiated restructuring program.

The overall battle of the budget in the United States will be fierce this year. The administration projects a deficit in the coming fiscal year, USFY 1986, of over $200 billion if there are no further spending reductions—and this is an optimistic figure. It has responded by proposing drastic cuts (over $40 billion) in spending and the elimination of many popular programs. Congress is likely to give the President less in the way of domestic and social cuts (although still very substantial reductions) while significantly reducing his defense proposals, and will ultimately attempt to raise taxes. In such an environment, when U.S. citizens are being asked to sacrifice, a major increase in foreign aid to Israel will be a difficult proposition to sell. If Israel cannot show that its citizens are sharing in the sacrifice, not just the administration but Congress too will be reluctant to support its emergency-aid requests.

Moreover, an influential staff report of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations states categorically that while "American foreign assistance can help Israel cope with its difficulties," it "cannot by itself arrest Israel's problems of hyper-inflation, labor unrest, low productivity, declining revenues, growing unemployment, and sluggish exports." The report calls for "[m]ajor domestic economic reform and deep budget cuts." This report will have an important role in convincing Congress that to be successful, aid must be tied to an Israeli austerity program.*

There are other considerations, too. Since levels of foreign aid to Egypt tend to follow those of Israel in a tandem relationship, the administration and Congress would find it hard to increase assistance to Israel without favorable consideration of an increase to Egypt. The government of Egypt is already asking for $1 billion in addition to its already existing level of $2.2 billion in military and economic aid. Such an increase would mean that Egypt and Israel together would account for almost 50 percent of the entire foreign-assistance program of the United States, itself the least popular account in the budget. All the more need, then, for Israel to make a convincing case of its willingness to sacrifice.

It must be borne in mind as well that the U.S. government is unlikely to do for a foreign country what it has not done for its own people. The recent precedents in which direct federal assistance was provided to a U.S. corporation and a U.S. city in distress were undertaken only after strict conditions were imposed. The Carter administration responded to the threat of the Chrysler Corporation's bankruptcy and New York City's insolvency by providing federal loan guarantees and other assistance—in both cases over substantial congressional opposition—but only when major internal reforms were promised and when oversight

* See U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Staff Report, "The Economic Crisis in Israel," 98th Congress, Second Session, November 1984, by Michael Kraft and Gerald Connolly, which I have used extensively for this article.

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mechanisms were created to assure compliance with the promised changes. In each case, the guiding principle was to impose conditions sufficiently stiff to assure that the aid did not go into the same mismanaged coffers, and to discourage numerous other cities and corporations from similarly seeking federal aid. It would be highly unrealistic to expect the President to help a foreign government, even a trusted ally, without similar concessions.

In general, the free-market orientation which informs the Reagan administration's economic policy in the U.S. leads it to be less sensitive to the historically greater role of the state in the economy of Israel. There is a built-in desire to act according to classic conservative doctrines and to require less government involvement in the economy. The administration's attitude toward Israel's economic plight is altogether more heavily influenced by economists than by politicians or diplomats. Secretary of State George Shultz is himself a professional economist of considerable repute, who has held academic appointments in economics and served as Secretary of the Treasury. He believes it would be a disservice both to the United States and to Israel to agree to a huge increase in aid without the type of reforms in Israel which would make that aid efficacious.

Secretary Shultz, indeed, has appointed four eminent American economists—Herbert Stein, Stanley Fischer, Paul McCracken, and Abe Siegel—to review Israel's proposed economic reforms and advise him on their adequacy. A joint working group, consisting of these outside economists and top State Department and Treasury Department officials, has been meeting regularly with key Israeli economic officials. There is broad agreement as to what steps should be taken to deal with the unprecedented crisis. Some of them are absolutely necessary in order to win administration support, while others are desirable but not essential. The "mandatory" actions include the following:

- Real budget cuts of some $2 billion for the Israeli fiscal year beginning April 1, 1985. This would be a substantial reduction in an overall budget of $23 billion, particularly when it is recognized that the budget has only around $13 billion in discretionary expenditures, net of debt repayments. But government expenditures are now over 60 percent of GNP (compared to about 24 percent in the U.S.) and the deficit over 15 percent of GNP (compared to over 5 percent in the U.S.). The cuts would leave the budget deficit at a manageable level. But they would also almost certainly lead to significant unemployment, especially in Israel's bloated public sector, and, temporarily, to a real drop in the standard of living.

The case for large infusions of U.S. aid is premised on the need to provide a cushion for the impact of these budget cuts, since the sharp rise in unemployment to which they will lead will not be immediately absorbed by the private sector in increased exports. This increased aid, together with reduced consumption of imports, would help close the balance-of-payments gap. But the aid is viewed purely as transition assistance.

- Additional reductions in subsidies on a variety of products, to reduce the artificial stimulus for consumption. Israel's "Package II" program of major subsidy cuts, effective this February, is an important step in the direction desired by the administration.
- Further devaluation of the shekel relative to the U.S. dollar. While this will have a temporary inflationary impact, devaluation is considered essential to the push for additional exports, since it will make Israeli products less expensive and more attractive in world markets.
- Continued wage restraint, led by the Histadrut. American officials are calling for a reduction in inflation-adjusted wages for Israeli workers. This will mean direct and personal sacrifice, but American experts note that real wages in Israel increased 16 percent between 1980 and 1983, and that of this only about one-third must be "undone." The sweeping new wage-and-price-control agreement signed on January 24 between the Histadrut and Israel's Manufacturers Association should help here. Wage restraint can substitute in part for still higher levels of unemployment to fight inflation. Like devaluation, it also will help lower the cost of Israeli goods and make them more competitive abroad. The Reagan administration, however, views wage-price controls with little enthusiasm, and is likely to be more impressed by deep cuts in government subsidies of basic consumer products such as milk, bread, butter, cooking oil, and gasoline.

I can also testify from my own White House experience—the Carter administration employed voluntary wage and price guidelines in 1979-80—that such controls are not effective in the long run unless accompanied by more fundamental actions like budget cuts, reductions in aggregate demand, and monetary reform. Otherwise the controls become meaningless at worst or targets to be cleverly avoided at best. Indeed, it is fundamentally unfair to workers to keep their wages controlled if the government is unwilling to lower demand by other measures in order to reduce inflationary pressures on prices.

- Some modifications in indexation. American officials place greater emphasis on ending the indexation of assets and government bonds than on ending the indexation of wages. Since indexation increases the shekel value of liquid assets, stopping the issuance of new indexed assets will dissipate the problem over time.
- Monetary reform that will give the Bank of Israel greater independence from political pressures and end the requirement that the Bank print money to cover the government's budget deficit. This would impose a tougher discipline on Israel, reduce the amount of money in circulation,

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and fight inflation. Of all the "mandatory" steps, this one is likely to have the greatest long-term impact.

Among the actions which some American officials and some Israelis feel are desirable for the health of the Israeli economy but are not essential preconditions of additional U.S. aid are an end to or modification of wage-and-salary indexation and "dollarization" of the shekel.

Some U.S. experts see dollarization as the best method to assure the soundness of the shekel and the surest way to eliminate excessive inflationary pressures, while others are skeptical of the notion of tying the value of the currency of a small nation which must export to survive to that of a mammoth economy (whose dollar is already overvalued). But if opinion is divided on the issue of dollarization, there is agreement that the exchange rate of the shekel must be stabilized. An alternative to pegging it to the dollar would be to peg it to a basket of currencies including the dollar.

IV

EVEN if Israel proposes a plan which the administration can bless, important issues remain which can yet strain U.S.-Israel relations if not handled with care on both sides.

One is the problem of monitoring compliance with the plan. Neither the administration nor the Congress is likely to approve a massive aid increase without some assurance that the Israeli program is actually being effectuated. Budget cuts, for instance, must not simply be announced but must be actually implemented by departments of government. Israel's credibility on this score has already been challenged, both by critics (like Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "How Much Aid for Israel?," Washington *Post*, December 26, 1984) and more importantly, by friends (like William Safire, "Passing the Shekel," New York *Times*, December 27, 1984, and Irving Kristol, "Even in Israel, No Economic Miracles," *Wall Street Journal*, January 25, 1985) who cannot locate the over $1 billion in budget cuts already promised.

It has been suggested that, since the U.S. government cannot adequately monitor the Israeli plan, the staff of the IMF provide the expertise for "surveillance." Any monitoring plan will involve some surrender of control by Israel over its own freedom of economic decision-making; but this is an inevitable price for ending the crisis.

A second problem has to do with the level of aid which will actually be provided, assuming that the U.S. approves of an Israeli plan. Israel is seeking $800 million in emergency aid in the current fiscal year and a total of $4.05 billion in economic and military aid in USFY 1986. Over the next three years Israel has told the U.S. it needs $12 billion in economic and military aid, all in the form of grants.

The administration's new budget request for USFY 1986 will include about $1.8 billion in military assistance, up from $1.4 billion in 1985. (Israel had requested $2.2 billion.) In economic aid, the President's budget shows an unprecedented blank, awaiting submission of an acceptable Israeli plan. But in any event the administration wants the additional assistance to come in the form of a supplemental request to the *current* year's budget, with payments spread out over 1985-86. The administration does not want to add this amount to its 1986 budget, because this would make it even more difficult to cut 1986 spending and would permanently raise the base level of Israel's aid figure—something Israel might prefer but which the administration stoutly opposes.

Moreover, there is a growing feeling in Congress and the administration that the additional money should be dispensed over time, rather than in one lump sum as Israel would like, and should be premised on the achievement of certain "milestones" in Israel's reform plan. Thus, for example, Israel might receive $750 million immediately with increments of $250 million spread over USFYs 1985 and 1986, depending on satisfactory progress toward certain defined goals. This too raises obvious problems from Israel's perspective, but again can be justified on the grounds that the U.S. is being asked to assume the role of the IMF.

A third problem, more ominous, has to do with the possible linking of such large increases to implicit political conditions. I do not mean by this any pressuring of Israel to accept the 1982 Reagan peace initiative or any attempt to impose restraints on Israeli action on the West Bank—I do not believe these are in the offing. But the release of additional aid might well be timed to coincide with congressional consideration of arms-sales packages to Saudi Arabia or Jordan. This would make it harder for Israel and its friends in Washington to fight such a sale, even though it might pose a real security threat to Israel.

As difficult as these issues are, they pale in comparison to the dilemma that will face both Israel and the U.S. if Israel is unable to propose a plan of sufficient boldness to warrant administration approval. It is unlikely, for reasons already discussed, that Israel would then be able to make an "end-run," bypassing the President and the State Department and going to Congress directly. But if it were to attempt to do so nevertheless, and were even to succeed, after a prolonged struggle, in winning some of the additional emergency funds it seeks, what would it have won? Such a course of action would almost certainly leave a residue of bitterness in an administration that has been generally friendly toward Israel, and at the beginning of a new four-year term; it could cause a loss of good will among the American public, seeing large amounts of additional foreign aid going to a nation, albeit a valiant ally, that has declined to make the sacrifices asked of it; and it would leave scars in Congress after the battle. Perhaps the worst scenario of all would be for Israel to receive the additional funds from Congress, over the administration's objections,

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and then fail to pull itself out of its difficulties because the necessary internal steps were never taken.

V

My own experience as a member of an American administration that did not deal successfully with inflation (which, while low by current Israeli standards, was high for the United States), has left some indelible impressions.

Severe inflation can only be attacked successfully by sustained, early actions that inevitably bring sacrifice, pain, and suffering. The Carter administration was unprepared to take such steps, in part because the inflationary pressures occurred late in the administration, as an election loomed, and in part because of a recognition that the people who would suffer the most from the anti-inflation medicine would be those toward the bottom of the economic ladder who formed the bulk of the Democratic party's constituency.

President Reagan, by contrast, sustained a hard recession early in his term in order to achieve results later which led to his landslide reelection. The recession of 1981-82 was the most severe since the Great Depression of the 1930's, with unemployment soaring to almost 11 percent. But it helped wring double-digit inflation out of the system and produce strong growth (over 6 percent in 1984), moderate inflation (4 percent in 1984), and lower unemployment (just over 7 percent at the end of 1984).

The lesson for Israel's unity government is that it must act promptly, at the beginning of its tenure when sacrifice can be more easily asked and longer sustained, not later when elections are on everyone's mind. If it bends to pressures and eases off as the bite of sacrifice takes hold, it will have inflicted pain on the public without reaping the benefits—precisely what happened with the Carter administration's policy.

The Carter administration feared unemployment more than it did inflation, until inflation got so far out of control that it could not be restrained without deliberate efforts to slow the economy. No one can lightly advise Israel to accept higher unemployment in order to reduce inflation, but the sad truth is that in the short term there is an inexorable trade-off between these two. Israel, unfortunately, will not rid itself of triple-digit inflation without a substantial short-term rise in unemployment.

Inflation cannot be treated through half-measures and gradualism; its back must be broken with firm and decisive steps—the kind any democracy, and particularly one with Israel's grave burdens and responsibilities, finds it difficult to undertake. Moreover, there is always a lag between tough anti-inflation measures and visible success. This is as true in the U.S., where the restrictive monetary policies at the end of the Carter and beginning of the Reagan administrations did not show results for well over a year, as it is in Israel. That is why the Israeli public must be told frankly that a significant sacrifice will be needed for considerably longer than a year, but also that the sacrifice will lead to sustained non-inflationary growth in the future. Unless the public is prepared, it will soon become disenchanted with the immediate, negative results of austerity and this will undercut the support the government needs to pursue tough policies until they succeed—as they will if they are given enough time. Israel, which has made so many valiant sacrifices on the field of battle, must be equally willing to sacrifice at home to preserve a strong economy.

VI

The decisions that will be taken by the American and Israeli governments in 1985 have within them the capacity to alter, permanently for the better, the entire U.S.-Israel relationship. The political relationship is already one of mutual affection, respect, and admiration, both between governments and between peoples. And as political ties continue to improve, so too can the climate of economic cooperation. Negotiations have just successfully concluded on the Free Trade Area, which will open up the entire U.S. market to Israeli goods duty-free. Increased foreign investment in Israel should now be stimulated, and additional Israeli products developed to take advantage of the openness of the world's largest market. The competition from increased U.S. imports into Israel will help make Israeli industry more productive and efficient.

The year 1985 is a propitious time for Israel to take the bold action required. The U.S. economy is now into its third year of strong recovery. While Europe has been slower to recover from the recession of the early 1980's, there too an economic uplift is beginning. Inflationary pressures worldwide are easing. Oil prices are plunging. Israel, with its great human resources, its well-educated workforce, some of the world's premier scientists and engineers, and a strong technological base, is in a position to take advantage of all this.

There is, as well, a growing recognition among American Jews that donations to the United Jewish Appeal, important as they are, do not suffice to help Israel's economy. Various American Jewish businessmen are discussing joint ventures with Israeli firms, direct investment in Israel, and a capital fund aimed at helping Israel become the world's next mecca for high technology. Israel has the capability to see this through.

But so much of this bright future depends on taking tough steps and then sticking with them until they work. Israel has a legitimate concern that the short-term consequences of the actions it is being advised to adopt will be painful and difficult. But the consequences of failing to do what is necessary are far greater—for they will inevitably mean more economic and social suffering later, and a loss of control over the future.

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Israel's Economic Crisis: What the U.S. Can Do

Steven L. Spiegel

ISRAEL is in serious financial trouble, and the American press is filled with analyses and solutions. Most accounts treat the country as an almost hopeless basket case—at least as an endless sponge off the American taxpayer. Authorities offer differing explanations of the problem: the high rate of government spending (in Israel the national budget is about equal to the country's GNP); the cost of West Bank settlements, or of the Lebanon war; the high rate of private consumption; serious errors in judgment which have impaired the nation's economic performance. While there is disagreement about the cause of the current crisis, nearly everyone agrees on the need for a government-imposed austerity program. Even many of Israel's friends in this country believe that budget cuts, not aid, are what Israel requires. Indeed, at the end of 1984 the U.S. refused to increase aid until Israel adopted a much tougher economic policy.

The one element missing from the discussion happens to be the crucial one—the dimension of strategy. Whether and how the United States helps Israel in this period of serious budgetary constraint should depend, in large measure, on the manner in which our interests will be affected by one course of action or another. To grasp the implications of this statement requires a look at the nature of Israel's economy and its relation to American strategic and defense needs.

I

IN CONTRAST to most countries that are the recipients of U.S. aid, and in spite of the current crisis, Israel boasts an economy that is fundamentally sound. The country is able to feed itself and export a surplus in agricultural products; it has a significant and growing high-technology industry. Indeed, Israel is a pioneer in both defense and civilian areas of high technology and in many instances surpasses Europe on the frontiers of the latest developments. This success is reflected in exports that were higher per capita than Japan's until 1983 and are still almost twice as high as South Korea's. From 1970 to 1982 Israel had a higher export growth rate than Japan, the United States, and West Germany.

Why, then, the crisis? The main cause is the chronically huge defense burden. Israel suffers from one of the world's highest per-capita defense expenditures—an average of 25.5 percent of GNP over the last decade. (The comparable figure for the U.S., even after the Reagan build-up, is about 7 percent.) Military expenditures ballooned after the October 1973 war when the cost of weaponry began to increase dramatically and Israel was forced to compete with rapidly escalating Arab purchases. In 1968, Israel had purchased Phantom jets from the United States at a cost of $2.4 million per plane; when it purchased F-15's only a decade later, each jet cost $24 million. It is not surprising, therefore, that the intensified arms race in the Middle East has forced Israel to increase imports at an alarming rate, swamping the country's exports in the process. The results are depleted foreign reserves, a huge imbalance of payments, and an annual inflation rate approaching 450 percent.

The figures tell the story. In 1972 Israel's growth rate was an impressive 12.6 percent. Ten years later it was zero. As Israel began to borrow large sums to pay for its post-1973 rearmament program, its external debt mushroomed. In 1972, Israel owed $4 billion abroad; today that figure is $23 billion. Before the October 1973 war Israel spent "only" 17.6 percent of GNP on defense and its economy was regarded as vibrant. The extra 8 percent of GNP spent on defense over the last decade is about $2 billion—the amount critics say the Israelis should be cutting from their budget.

Even the conclusion of peace with Egypt complicated the country's economic difficulties. The need to move critical airfields and bases, and to purchase equipment to compensate for the loss

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of strategic depth, exacerbated the burdens of debt and inflation, and easily cost the country the equivalent of an extra year's defense budget. Moreover, if Israel had retained the Sinai it would have become a net exporter of oil. Today its annual oil bill of almost $2 billion adds to the balance-of-trade problems.

Defense and debt servicing together account for about 60 percent of Israel's national budget. Both are related to national security and account for about $14.5 billion out of a $23-billion national budget. A further defense-related drain is caused by the incalculable costs of a reserve system in which every male citizen under the age of fifty-five is eligible to serve up to 45 days a year in the army, under "normal" conditions. Even construction adds to the defense burden, because of the need to build expensive shelters in homes and offices. The costs to society of conscription, stockpiling, and civil defense are hidden burdens that add as much as another 25 percent to the Israeli defense budget.

It is true that Israel receives the highest proportion of American foreign aid of any country—in Fiscal Year 1985, at $2.6 billion, some 17 percent of the total aid budget. It is also true that the President and Congress have recently moved to convert Israel's aid package, which has traditionally been in the form of market-rate loans, to outright grants. American assistance to Israel has been impressive and generous.

Nevertheless, in 1984, aid to Israel, when viewed in constant 1984 dollars, was less than 50 percent of what it had been a decade earlier. Economic aid now barely covers Israel's annual debt payments to the United States. Since U.S. aid is typically allocated only if the recipient is prepared to spend the funds on American goods in the U.S., Israel's aid has almost invariably had to be used in America, where the costs are not always competitive. (Major exceptions have been funds extended to Israel for the development of the Merkavah tank and the Lavi fighter aircraft, and loans covering a part of the expense for redeployment from the Sinai.)

Moreover, in view of the services Israel performs for the U.S., it is possible to argue that the assistance it receives is rather small. Critics often focus on the $2.6-billion figure, ignoring the fact that this only approaches 1 percent of the U.S. defense budget. This, for a country that is not a Third World dependency but a major unit in America's network of allies around the world.

In addition, many of the services the United States gets from Israel cost nothing—which is not the case with our other allies. For example, both Israel and West Germany have bases on their soil which might be used by American armed forces in an emergency, but only the bases in Germany are co-financed, i.e., the U.S. pays a portion of the cost but West Germany controls them. This is an element of the NATO infrastructure program to which we contribute about $500 million annually; through the same program, the U.S. pays for a portion of West Germany's radar surveillance and air defense systems. In the case of Israel, there is no comparable burden-sharing mechanism. When Israel's E2C Hawkeyes watch Soviet aircraft activity in the eastern Mediterranean and over Syria, Israel pays the entire bill; when AWACS watch Soviet aircraft in Eastern Europe, the U.S. shares the cost with its NATO allies. The U.S. depends on Israeli control of the eastern Mediterranean, which has key implications for NATO's security, but Israel alone performs the task.

The U.S. today has about 330,000 troops stationed in Europe and another 110,000 in East Asia; although the presence of the troops aids these countries in their own defense, it is not called a subsidy. In the critical period after World War II the United States helped Germany and Japan emerge from defeat; the assistance inherent in occupation and alliance was not regarded as largesse. At various points over the last three decades the United States has increased aid to South Korea in response to Seoul's participation in the Vietnam war and to contemplated U.S. withdrawals from other positions in East Asia; the aid, which helped produce the Korean economic advances of the 1970's, was not regarded as charity.

The U.S. legitimately subsidizes its allies because they assist in the defense of America's vital interests. But the failure to classify this assistance as foreign aid—or, to put it the other way, the failure to classify aid to Israel as defense assistance—creates a distorted picture, both of our own burdens and of those shouldered by Israel. In 1983, the entire U.S. aid budget worldwide was only $14 billion; the amount allocated to Israel in that budget—17 percent—seems abnormally high. But the *total* aid budget was only 10 percent of what we spent in 1983 on NATO alone. Defense is more expensive than foreign aid. In terms of defense, what Israel costs us is minuscule, while what it gives us in return is invaluable.

II

SINCE Israel is obviously important to American interests, why is aid to Israel seen as charity, whereas subsidies to other allies are viewed in terms of security? The answer to this question lies in the history of the overall American approach to the Arab-Israeli dispute.

As Peter Grose has pointed out in his recent book, *Israel in the Mind of America*, support for the Jewish state was regarded from the beginning as a moral rather than a security commitment by the United States. In the early days of the state, anyone who seriously suggested that Israel could serve as an important asset in the effort to combat Communism in the Middle East was either ignored or derided. To most national-security ana-

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lysts, indeed, American support for Israel was an act of charity for which the U.S. would suffer, in diminished influence in the Arab world. Only after the Six-Day War of 1967 did Israel begin to be viewed by some officials as having a modicum of strategic utility, but these positive perceptions vanished again in October 1973 with the initially successful attack by Egypt and Syria and the accompanying oil embargo by the Arab members of OPEC.

The disposition to think of Israel as a charity case has been encouraged—however inadvertently—by the American Jewish community, the group which has also provided the bedrock of Israel's support in American society. Much of Jewish life in this country since the 1940's has been organized around fundraising for Israel. The dinners, the meetings, the rallies, the constant appeals for cash, although based on a vision of Israel as a country of superhuman warriors and pioneers, have paradoxically fostered a "poor cousin" syndrome. This became exacerbated in the late 1970's when some American Jewish leaders came to believe that the "cousin" was not spending its donated funds with probity and efficiency.

What many of these leaders were really reflecting was an unhappiness with Israel's negotiating posture, which they felt to be intransigent and myopic. And in this unhappiness they were taking their cue from the Carter administration, with its belief that only Israel stood in the way of a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict. In this atmosphere, not surprisingly, the notion that support for Israel meant a sacrifice of American interests gained new adherents.

But if, for a variety of historical reasons, Israel has been widely seen in the United States as either a charity case or a liability, in the late 1970's a series of events occurred which transformed America's relations with most of the states of the Middle East and began to cause some rethinking of the role of Israel.

When Egyptian President Sadat traveled to Jerusalem in 1977, he refuted the American view that peace between Israel and the Arab states had to be pursued indirectly and comprehensively. And when, subsequently, Saudi Arabia and Jordan refused to assent first to the Camp David agreements and then to the Reagan plan, it was suddenly *their* turn to incur the displeasure (however qualified) of Washington.

The fall of the Shah of Iran was another factor conducing to a reassessment of the role of Israel in maintaining America's security interests in the Middle East. Successive administrations had seen Iran as a linchpin of the U.S. position. Even Carter, harsh though he was on the Shah's human-rights policies, called him an "island of stability in one of the more troubled areas of the world." If the Shah's regime had proved fragile, how could any non-democratic government in the area be considered stable?

Moreover, the replacement of the Shah's regime by one officially committed to fanatic anti-Americanism triggered a rapid deterioration of U.S. interests. In 1979, panic buying on the stock market led to a tripling of oil prices. Later in the year the hostage crisis drained American energies and influence for months thereafter. The chaos facilitated the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, bringing the threat of Soviet expansion closer to the Middle East oil fields. In the fall of 1980 the Iraqi regime—frightened by the Khomeini threat and covetous of territory—attacked Iran. This border war, in seemingly endless stalemate, still continues.

At the same time, the rise of the Shi'ite threat exacerbated traditional divisions within the Arab world, already sharpened by the growing gap between oil-rich and population-dense countries. When Arab Syria and Libya decided to support Persian Iran against Arab Iraq, the taboo against collaborating with countries at war with a part of the Arab nation was broken no less sharply than when Sadat traveled to Jerusalem. This did not mean that other Arab states were about to follow the example of Sadat (who was assassinated by Muslim fundamentalists in October 1981). But the preoccupation with Iran and with intra-Arab opponents did dissipate energies hitherto directed onto the conflict with Israel and reduced the importance of the Palestinian issue. Israel's smashing of the PLO base in Lebanon in the summer of 1982 further removed the Palestinian issue from the forefront of Arab attention.

All this forced the United States to begin rethinking its policies in the area. Since October 1973, it had been assumed that only a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute would resolve the energy crisis, improve America's relations with the major Arab states, and enhance regional stability. This ruled out any strategic cooperation with Israel, which, it was thought, would alienate the Arabs and jeopardize the entire structure of American diplomacy in the Middle East. The new crises in the area, for the most part unrelated to Israel yet involving the largest oil-price rises in history, the most violent indigenous Middle East war, the greatest humiliation of the United States, and the most provocative Soviet action ever, thoroughly undermined these assumptions and helped bring about a reconsideration of the role of Israel in American strategy.

III

To be sure, there were those in Congress and outside government who had already begun to question the treatment of Israel as a problem rather than an asset. These critics argued that the Arab states, whatever objections they might have to close U.S.-Israeli ties, were more interested in their own survival. Were not these Arabs more likely to be alienated by U.S. weakness than by actions—even if taken

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in concert with Israel—that would strengthen American credibility? And quite apart from the Arab reaction, the fact was that Israel was the premier military power in the area, especially after the Shah's downfall; this alone suggested the need to expand and strengthen our ties with the Jewish state.

One of the leading figures in this group was the then-candidate Ronald Reagan, who with simple incisiveness brushed aside the cautious fears of national-security officials (and the qualms of many American Jews) and proposed in effect to treat Israel as a strategic ally. Yet when Reagan became President he allowed his Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger, to press for a closer relationship not with Israel but with pro-American Arab regimes, on the theory that this would lead to a more defensible Western position in the area. Although this did not necessarily rule out cooperation with Jerusalem, during the first three years of the Reagan term conflicts within the administration and with the Begin government prevented the implementation of any new strategic program with Israel.

The most important of the disputes occurred over the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982, which—initial appearances to the contrary notwithstanding—the United States did not support. Although there may have been sympathy for the Israeli objective of ending the PLO threat to the Galilee, there was also a widespread belief within the administration that the broader objectives of destroying the PLO, breaking Syrian control over Lebanese politics, remaking the Lebanese polity under Christian control, and achieving an Israeli-Lebanese peace could not be accomplished. During the summer of 1982 the U.S. and Israel were working at cross-purposes. The administration was concerned to limit any possible damage to its position in the Arab world. It also sought a particular solution to the Palestinian question which it feared Ariel Sharon's gambit in Lebanon was designed to prevent. Therefore, it agreed to participate in a multinational force whose prime mission was to guarantee the safe exit of PLO fighters still in West Beirut, and it issued the Reagan plan on September 1.

Because the administration approach in 1982 was based on assumptions which had become outdated, each part of this policy proved a failure. When the United States released the Reagan plan, it believed it had assurances that Jordan would rapidly agree to enter into negotiations with the U.S., Egypt, and Israel; but King Hussein tarried and then refused. When the United States gained an Israeli-Lebanese accord in May 1983, it believed that Syria had agreed to withdraw from Lebanon once Israel made a parallel commitment; Assad reneged. The administration thought Saudi Arabia would press both Hussein and Assad to acquiesce in the two American initiatives; but Saudi Arabia held back. The Reagan team had simply ignored the weakening of the Arab states over the previous years, the increasing reluctance of pro-American Arab regimes to take independent initiatives, the reduced centrality of the Palestinian question, and the disintegrative impact of the dynamic new movements emanating from Teheran.

The administration's greatest failure in Lebanon, however, came in the wake of its third initiative—the attempt to use the American presence in the multinational peace force to determine the outcome of the Lebanese civil war. The U.S. simply did not have the capacity to achieve its objectives by means short of a massive intervention that would not be supported at home and whose success could not be guaranteed. The attempt to achieve these aims "on the cheap" by employing a small force in a non-combat role, backed by offshore firepower, was bound to have the devastating consequences it did.

NEITHER the Israeli nor the American experience in Lebanon is a testimonial to successful policies. But they have not proved to be strategically damaging. They carried a price—in the loss of life, in tarnished reputations, in the improved Soviet weapons sent to Syria, in the cooling of Egyptian-Israeli relations, and, for Israel, in the $3-billion cost of the war and the harm caused to the social fabric of the country. But in calculating the political-military position of both countries it cannot be stated on balance that either is weaker than it was before the war. Moreover, the war has had the unforeseen effect of deepening the conception in Washington of Israel as a strategic ally.

The failure of the U.S. to develop an effective policy which would secure a united and independent Lebanon has underlined the significance of trustworthy local allies in the area. Confrontation with terrorism in Lebanon has made American officials more sympathetic to Israel's problems and more dependent on the tactical lessons of Israeli experience. Israel has, in addition, proved once again to be the only country in the area ready and willing to identify with the fundamental strategic objectives of the United States and sufficiently powerful to act on the basis of that identification. The Arab states remain either hostile to the United States or too frightened by Iran or the radicals in the Arab world to act.

Thus the Saudis have refused to grant Washington bases on their soil and have refrained from actively backing U.S. initiatives. King Hussein has proved once again that the very quality which enables him to survive, his tactical caution, makes him a weak pillar on which to base policy. The Sultan of Oman, traditionally friendly and with a country located strategically on the Strait of Hormuz, has indicated that American use of his facilities cannot be guaranteed. Although some believe that the new diplomatic relations between Iraq and Washington hold out hope, Baghdad

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shows no signs of willingness to further U.S. interests in the area; even if it were prepared to do so, the war with Iran has sapped its strength. (Association with Iraq would also harm whatever chance there might be for reconciliation with Iran.) Worst of all, negotiations with Egypt over the use of upgraded facilities at Ras Banas on the Red Sea—considered critical to any American activity in the area—completely broke down in early 1984, and discussions on the use of other facilities have also fared poorly. The current Egyptian government remains reluctant to risk its newly regained respectability in the Arab world by becoming too closely associated with the United States.

In short, the idea of a pro-Western entente among Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, and Arafat's wing of the PLO has proved chimerical. None of these parties is sufficiently strong or independent to pursue policies in close cooperation with the United States. The power of Saudi Arabia and Iraq has been further diminished by the billions of petrodollars wasted in the war with Iran and by the worldwide oil glut of the 1980's which has decreased their leverage with respect both to their fellow Arab states and to the Western powers. Added to this, in the eastern Mediterranean, are the moves by the Papandreou government in Greece to distance itself from the United States, and continuing tensions between Greece and Turkey that place in question the reliability of either Athens or Ankara in a crisis.

If Israel's perceived value has thus grown since the upheavals of the late 1970's, this is hardly to suggest that it is or should be America's sole ally in the Middle East. Nor could the Israelis be expected to behave like mercenaries, to defend the oil fields with their own blood and treasure, or to act as arbiters of regional antagonisms. The country is too small, its struggle for survival too urgent, and its acceptance in the area too tentative. Yet Israel's value as a democratic, militarily and politically vibrant ally cannot be underestimated. In the Middle East, Israel plays a role fully comparable to that of the NATO countries in Europe, which by their very existence serve as buffers against anti-Western onslaughts.

IV

Events of the last decade have thus made Israel more critical than ever to the maintenance of U.S. interests throughout the Middle East; yet Israel stands on the brink of economic collapse. Unless a satisfactory policy is developed for dealing with this situation, the U.S. position in the area will be compromised and America will have to assume a series of new and costly burdens.

Shimon Peres was right when he suggested on his trip to the United States in October 1984 that Israel could have a robust economy or a strong defense, but not both: "Our own problem is either to make Israel weak militarily and strong economically, or to maintain our military posture and try to look for economic assistance." The economic crisis has already forced reductions in defense spending, which will mean cutbacks in procurement, research and development, training, and in the size of the regular army, and is bound to affect morale in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) as well.

Because the U.S. requires a viable Israeli defense posture, it cannot allow a deteriorating economy to threaten Israeli security policy and ultimately the balance of forces in the area. Yet in recent years, and despite the growing recognition of Israel's strategic importance, American policy has sunk into a vicious circle by which the Israelis are being bankrupted. Billions in arms sales to the Arabs are "balanced" by millions in aid increases to Israel. Israel is then forced to increase spending drastically in order to offset the Arab advances. The Israelis are being swamped by the effects of burgeoning Arab arsenals without the Arabs' having to fire a shot.

Although Israeli defense spending increased (in constant 1981 dollars) from $2.9 to $5.5 billion between 1972 and 1982 and is now declining, Arab military expenditures in that time period increased from $7.8 to $41.5 billion and are still rising. The effects have been dramatic. Before the Six-Day War of 1967, Israel had about 250 combat aircraft and the Arabs about 800. In 1984 the comparable numbers were 550 for Israel and 2,500 for the Arabs. In 1969 Israel had about 1,000 battle tanks to the Arabs' 2,200; by 1984 the Israelis had under 4,000 but the Arabs had about 15,000. As late as 1970 Israel could mobilize about 300,000 men, and the Arab states combined could mobilize about 750,000. Today Israel can mobilize 500,000, while the Arab manpower pool exceeds 3,400,000, a larger number of troops than the United States maintains. Thus, the mobilizable manpower ratio has changed between 1970 and the mid-1980's from less than 2½ to one to almost seven to one against Israel.*

Despite their series of defeats at the hands of the Israelis, the Arabs thus have a weapon which could yet undo the Jewish state. It is true that Israel has previously been able to balance sophisticated Arab arms purchases with its own expensive technological developments, but as Arab purchases continue and Israel is forced to cut costs, the margin of advantage is systematically being reduced. Some observers argue that the current Middle East stalemate is likely to be broken by

* These figures include Egypt, despite the peace treaty, because Israel cannot afford to ignore Egyptian military capabilities. Even if Egypt is discounted, however, the Arab figures are still staggering: arms expenditures of $39.2 billion; 2,000 combat aircraft; just over 13,000 battle tanks; and almost 2,500,000 mobilizable men.

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Arab frustration, but a greater danger lies in a breakdown of the all-important Israeli deterrent, without which U.S. policy in the area will itself be wrecked.

The strange logic of our current arms policy nonetheless continues in place. In 1985, new American arms sales are being considered to the Arab states—including 40 additional F-15's to Saudi Arabia. At the time of previous such sales, in 1978 and 1981, it was argued by their proponents that the Saudis would reciprocate by encouraging the "peace process," or by keeping the price of oil down. These arguments have worn thin. But today there are other arguments: the Europeans will sell to the Arabs in any case; the sophisticated arms are necessary for defense against Iran and the Islamic fundamentalists; the U.S. must maintain its influence in the Arab world; the U.S. needs the cash.

In 1978, the sale of F-15's to Saudi Arabia signaled the entry of major new weapons systems into the area; in 1981, with the sale of AWACS, the United States for the first time offered an Arab state a system technologically superior to comparable weapons being sold to Israel. From this point of view the latest round of arms sales is not so ominous, constituting primarily additional quantities of sophisticated weaponry and specialized add-ons to the existing equipment, rather than totally new systems. But unlike the situation in 1978 and 1981, Israel is increasingly unable to afford the technological counters to these arms. By engaging in major arms sales to Arab states, the U.S. is thus undercutting the security of its key supporter in the area, and jeopardizing its own vital security interests.

V

Out of concern for its own interests the United States cannot permit Israel to suffer a defense breakdown or an economic collapse. The question is therefore not whether to assist Israel, but how. There are four general approaches, and they are not mutually exclusive. The United States can reduce arms sales to Arab countries; accede to Israel's requests for major increases in economic and military assistance; initiate a program of security assistance through the U.S. defense budget; begin to provide the Israeli defense industry with the long-term contracts it requires.

The first two approaches—ameliorating Israel's burdens or offsetting its budgetary pressures—are familiar enough. As to the third, some Congressmen have already suggested placing the increases in assistance requested by Israel within the defense budget. The suggestion has thus far been thwarted by the State Department, which seeks to keep all forms of foreign assistance within its jurisdiction, and by the Pentagon, which is uninterested, but it remains a sensible proposal.

The fourth approach is the most intriguing because it is the only one which addresses Israel's key economic problem—the need to increase exports. By providing long-term contracts, some through the defense budget, the U.S. could assist Israel in expanding its high-technology industries, which form the basis of the country's economic future and are central to its continued viable defense. Ironically, defense cooperation with Israel could actually be profitable to the U.S., because the Israelis have developed a host of innovations which could save substantial sums if adopted by the American armed forces.

As Gerald Steinberg has pointed out, the Israeli specialty is to develop arms which are "technologically current and more reliable but less complex, easier to maintain, and far less expensive than their American counterparts." The Israelis maintain their competitiveness by upgrading, refurbishing, and even rebuilding major high-cost weapons systems. In contrast to the United States, the Israelis stress operations and maintenance rather than new weapons, which can frequently demonstrate serious problems of performance and repair.

Moreover, the Israelis take advantage of their combat experience to adapt new designs to specific needs rather than merely emphasizing the latest technology, as is the American habit. They have developed rigorous testing procedures which are used before production begins, to avoid the types of errors frequently confronted in the United States. In weapons development they take an incremental approach, often grafting new components onto proven systems. As a consequence, their lead time between design and fielding a weapon is usually one-third to one-half that of the United States.

Thus, it may be wiser to pay the Israelis to develop certain systems. For example, the Israelis have produced a mini-RPV (a miniature plane with a TV camera used for battlefield intelligence) which is less sophisticated than the comparable U.S. model, but highly successful. The Israeli RPV has already been in combat, while the U.S. Army is still working on its program, the Aquila, which has suffered long delays and significant cost overruns. Two Israeli systems were developed at a cost of about $15 million each; the projected development cost of the U.S. system is $2.44 billion. In frustration, the U.S. Navy and Marines recently purchased several Israeli RPV's for their own use. As this one example only begins to illustrate, the Israelis are in a position to aid the U.S. in overcoming massive costs and cost overruns, problems of reliability, delays in production, "gold-plating," and rapid obsolescence.

Israeli skills also have profound implications for Europe. Outdated conventional equipment deployed by NATO could be refurbished by the Israelis at a fraction of the cost of new equipment. The sharing of skills with the United States and

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its European allies could be an important step toward reinforcing NATO's capabilities, especially significant during the next several years when the NATO stockpile of battlefield nuclear weapons will be reduced.

By helping to overhaul and maintain U.S. armed forces in the Mediterranean, Europe, and the Middle East, both in normal periods and during a crisis, Israel could save the United States several hundred million dollars, not only in improved procedures but by reducing the need to deploy as much equipment. With long-term contracts the U.S. could help expand Israeli facilities so that the Israelis could maintain equipment (especially aircraft) not currently in their inventory.

In the strategic-cooperation talks between the U.S. and Israel, no agreement has so far been reached for prepositioning American matériel such as arms, spare parts, and oil in Israel in case of an emergency. Yet Israel is a perfect point from which to resupply U.S. forces in Europe and the Middle East. American forward stockpiles are also increasingly vulnerable to a Soviet conventional first strike, and a reliable supply line would be an even more critical need if Greece and Turkey were not participating. Using Israel as a "swing" base to either the Persian Gulf or Europe would mean that the U.S. would be able to transport larger amounts of matériel more quickly and cheaply than if the equipment had to be shipped from the U.S. directly. Israel is peculiarly appropriate as a base of supply because it already has most of the facilities that the U.S. would require, and U.S. leaders need not worry that these facilities might become unusable due to government instability, indecisiveness, or even military attack.

THESE are just some of the benefits that might flow from a U.S. policy based forthrightly and not just formally on the notion of strategic cooperation with Israel. Such a policy could serve simultaneously to revive the Israeli economy, insure the Israeli deterrent, save substantial sums in the U.S. defense budget, and safeguard the American and Western position in the Middle East. Perhaps best of all, in contrast to what happens with foreign aid, such a program would begin to pay its own way immediately.

One objection that might be raised to this proposal is that Israel could thereby become a competitor of the United States in the arms field. But Israel is simply too tiny; even with its intolerable defense burden, it spends under $6 billion to America's $300 billion. Other constraints—the small domestic market, geographic distance, barriers on imports to the U.S.—similarly make it inconceivable that Israel will become a defense Goliath. What it is in a position to do is to offer the product of its know-how to American companies for cooperative programs in development or production. The result could, in fact, mean increased employment opportunities in American plants.

What is required on the part of American leaders is the wisdom and foresight to initiate a new program with a critical ally. The time to act is now, before Israel's economic crisis becomes so acute, or arms sales to Arab countries so large, that the effectiveness of the Israeli deterrent is compromised and we too begin to suffer the consequences of miscalculation.

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Terrorizing Children

Joseph Adelson and Chester E. Finn, Jr.

FOR Sir Francis Bacon, the child was hostage to Fortune; today the child is far more often hostage to ideology, and to the fears it can induce:

> I think about the bomb just about every day now. It makes me feel sad and depressed when I think about a bomb being dropped. I hope I'm with my family. I don't want to die alone.

Or a hostage to ideology, and to the sanctimoniousness it can also induce:

> I assume you are all sensible people, since it requires great intelligence to be elected to a highly important part of our nation. Other nations have their intelligent people. I'm sure Yuri Andropov is intelligent. Ronald Reagan, our President, is intelligent.
>
> But why, instead of using our intelligence for good uses, like peace, for example, do we use our intelligence for war? Is it right to call having missiles in Europe peace? Is it right to call a nuclear missile "peace keeper"?
>
> This is a waste of intelligence. We are criminalizing Newton, Galton, Einstein, Lucretius, and Democritus, great pioneers in the atom. What would Einstein have thought of this?

These anxious, earnest voices belong, respectively, to a sixteen-year-old girl and a twelve-year-old boy, both brought to Washington to instruct Congress and the nation about their fears, and about the epidemic of nuclear anxiety said to be overwhelming the young. These youngsters are described as representative—perhaps a bit more outspoken than most, yet typical in their being tormented by a vision of atomic apocalypse.

Their public appearance on September 20, 1983 was hosted by the House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, and sponsored by a group of psychiatrists and psychologists often thought to embody the "mental-health community." The presentation to Congress was one of a number of like events beginning in the autumn of 1983 and continuing for about a year after that. The American Orthopsychiatric Association offered several programs at its 1984 convention purporting to document the mental-health crisis being endured by children because of nuclear anxiety. Similar programs were presented at meetings of the American Psychological Association. That group's newly acquired magazine, *Psychology Today*, published a cover story on children's nuclear fears. There were any number of press releases, television appearances, and the like, all designed to alert the country to the terror produced in the young by the prospect of a nuclear war, said to be viewed by children as a clear and present danger.

These events have had some influence. There are many efforts to introduce "nuclear education" into the primary and secondary curriculum, in order to allay the panic—overt and covert—experienced by the young. During the 1984 presidential campaign, Walter Mondale said—as though it were settled fact—that American children are experiencing "nuclear nightmares." And why should he not believe so? We are told there is "research evidence," it is provided by famous names from famous universities, and presented at scientific meetings.

Yet things are not what they seem. Once we look at it closely, the "evidence" is suspect in various ways. Much of it is amateurish (one cited study was carried out by a high-school student); most of it is unacceptably soft, consisting of anecdotes rather than data; almost none of it has appeared in respectable journals; most of the "scientists" are in truth not scientists at all. Nor should we be impressed by the fact that the findings were presented at presumably scholarly meetings. The American Orthopsychiatric Association has for some years been devoted, in much of its programming, to agitprop pure and simple. The meetings of the American Psychological Association, once quite sober, are now a fifty-ring circus, some of it still given to scholarship but much of it to commerce and entertainment and politics, the last usually featuring such luminaries of the Left as Ed Asner, Ralph Nader, Bella Abzug, and Benjamin Spock.

Yet little of this is known generally. Those few social scientists with a strong interest in the mat-

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ter are likely to have other fires to fight. Others are indifferent, or discouraged. In the absence of opposing critical voices, we will soon come to accept as proved the idea of nuclear anxiety among the young. So it may be time to look carefully at the issues, and at the evidence.

II

THE recent election campaign has made it clearer than ever how fallible surveys can be in helping us assess seemingly simple questions. Throughout the campaign, the major presidential polls were far apart; less than two weeks before the election, at a time when attitudes presumably had stabilized, there were differences as large as sixteen percentage points between major surveys. If a straightforward question—whom would you vote for?—can produce such extraordinary variations from poll to poll, it does not require much imagination to understand how elusive findings will be when the questions are more difficult or ambiguous.

How in the world *do* we appraise the degree of anxiety in a population? The most direct and efficient method would appear to be self-report—that is, asking people what worries them, or makes them anxious or fearful. But the problems are visible immediately; it is likely that the specific word chosen will produce significant variations in the answers evoked. "Worry" will call to mind certain feelings, "anxiety" another group of feelings, "fear" still another, and so on. Yet that aside, it is evident that in dealing with so subjective a matter as a person's emotional state, responses will be conditioned by his vocabulary of self-report, and even more by his sense of what the questioner is up to, what *kind* of answer the interviewer has in mind. Thus, if you were to ask two citizens what makes them anxious these days, and one tells you he worries about Paul Volcker's monetary policy, and the other about the moisture that has begun to appear on his basement walls, you can be fairly sure that the two understand the questioner's intentions rather differently. (The example is not far-fetched, as we will see in a moment.)

The point is that interviewers ordinarily establish a context which influences and at times governs the answers given, and until that context is understood, we will not grasp the meaning, if any, of those answers. In short, the responses to questions on mood or state of mind or inner feelings simply cannot be taken at face value.

To do so is to commit the sin of literalism, a sin rarely practiced nowadays except by uninstructed undergraduates in their first attempts at social research, or by pop psychologists writing on such topics as the sexual revolution. Yet the evidence to support the idea of a widespread nuclear anxiety is being adduced, precisely, by just such a literalist use of self-report data. Children are asked to list their worries and (so we are told) report increasingly a concern about nuclear war, which now ranks number three in frequency. That seems impressive, until we discover that number two is . . . getting poor grades. The witness communicating these statistics to the Select Committee did not seem at all troubled by this; it was left to a Republican Congressman to point out to the assembled savants that findings so peculiar suggest some deep flaw in the study itself.

That may be putting it mildly. The survey evidence cited to the Committee is essentially worthless—not surprisingly, since the studies were carried out by persons without apparent background in survey work with children or adolescents, and giving few signs of familiarity with the appropriate scientific literature, or with the excruciatingly difficult technical problems inherent in research with the young. The contingent before the Committee was led by Harvard's John Mack and Yale's Robert Jay Lifton, both psychoanalysts, neither trained in empirical research, both nevertheless trading on the credentials of "doctor" and "professor," on that sense of the sacred we now give over to science, and on the gullibility and good faith of their listeners, all to the end of making an argument unabashedly political.

Poor as they are, the survey data are nevertheless rather more solid than the other findings adduced, which are drawn from "clinical interviews," workshops, and the like, all conducted by zealous partisans of a nuclear freeze, using as respondents youngsters drawn from New Class milieux. If the survey findings are amateurish, the interview data are corrupt, confounding amateurism and deliberate political purpose. That comes through clearly enough in the congressional transcript.

THE survey findings were presented to the Committee by John Goldenring, M.D., M.P.H., F.A.A.P., S.A.M., who is a pediatrician, and in water well over his head, to judge both by the technical ineptness of his study and by his failure to recognize it. Dr. Goldenring went into great detail to tell how he drew an absolutely representative sampling of California adolescents; but a moment's inspection of his tables suggests what a more careful perusal will confirm, that his sample is by no means representative. He also argued that his findings reveal a terrible fear of nuclear war among the young, though as we have already seen, considerably more children seem to worry about getting bad grades, and an equal percentage worry about crime and about being unable to get a job one day.

The transcript next brings us the words of the Committee chairman, George Miller of California. Miller had been under great pressure from the Republican minority members, who had been arguing, justifiably, that the Committee's function—to study such matters as divorce, broken families, child abuse, illegitimacy—was being perverted by these hearings, which had nothing to do with its mandate.

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Miller, determined to justify the session, now throws this very fat pitch to the witness: "Does the research show, or does it suggest, that fear of war is a significant driving force on the acting out of children, whether it is drug-seeking or suicide or bad grades or what have you, recognizing that our childhood is a mosaic made up of many, many experiences and pressures?" (There is nothing more infectious than shrink-talk.)

Dr. Goldenring answers:

> I would like to say that how we tried to get at that was with a couple of questions I mentioned that were very imperfect. It looked to us, this is just preliminary data, and very difficult to analyze, that some 5 to 15 percent of the kids may at least be thinking about nuclear war to a degree that might affect their behavior. Whether it actually affects their behavior or not we really can't say at this point. . . .

Imperfect, preliminary, difficult to analyze, 5 to 15 percent, may, might, cannot really say: Dr. Goldenring, to his credit, has been overcome by a sudden seizure of scientific caution; but what has happened to the nuclear nightmare, and what is the point of the hearings?

Needing some help, chairman Miller asks for further comments, and Dr. Lifton rushes in to fill the breach:

> We have certain parts of the puzzle—that is, we know that suicide in young people, or in older people, too, for that matter, occurs with despair even more than with depression, they are not quite the same thing. Despair involves the loss of larger human connectiveness. We know that the nuclear threat impairs that sense of larger human connectiveness. We don't have hard evidence that the nuclear threat as such has increased youth suicide or other forms of suicide, but we have lots of reasons to be worried about that combination, that interaction, and the research is needed, but we have something very suggestive and worrisome.

It would take a great deal of space to give this self-assured pronouncement the careful gloss it deserves. Let us just note that "we" do not in fact "know" any of the things said to be known—that suicide occurs more often with despair than depression (themselves not so easily distinguished); the link between despair and "human connectiveness"; the effect of nuclear threat upon that "connectiveness." The statement is not quite cant, since we must assume its sincerity; but it certainly is fancy invention, every bit of it, including the nonexistent word "connectiveness."

THERE is a steady streak of what can only be called intellectual bad faith running through much of the expert testimony. Drs. Lifton and Mack, in particular, want us to believe that they are scientific, hence disinterested, that they—speaking for the collective body of scholars—"know" things of import to the citizenry, and that their "findings" are indeed findings and not mere solipsism. So they discourse solemnly about tentative results and methodological problems and further studies needed, at the same time telling us of "research" whose trashiness defies belief.

Here is Dr. Mack reporting to the Committee on the "interview study" he and some colleagues carried out, wherein thirty-one Boston-area adolescents—"located" by teachers, students, and counselors—were questioned about the nuclear threat. What he reports about these youngsters is odd, yet strangely familiar. Each and every one expects a nuclear war in his lifetime. Dr. Mack tells us that "some" resist any "stereotyping" of the Soviet Union, and are skeptical about its reported enmity to the United States. They believe that the Soviet and U.S. governments are equally responsible for the arms race. Dr. Mack goes on to say that "many" want to know more about the Soviet Union, and want to "participate in the decision-making process, which is also seen as a way of overcoming the sense of terror and helplessness." Curious. All those teachers and students and counselors, scouting the entire Boston metropolitan area, were able to locate only mini-Macks for Dr. Mack to interview.

Having provided us with these research findings, he then moves to a different level of science, clinical impressions: an eleven-year-old asking her parents if she would have time to commit suicide before the bombs fell; five- and six-year-olds fearing they will not grow up; children who play video games in order to master their nuclear fears. And even youngsters seemingly without nuclear anxieties in fact suffer from them, since they may be "defending themselves."

This last idea is an important part of the gospel of nuclear terror. Children who talk about their fear prove the case, and children who do not talk about it also prove the case, since they suffer from "psychic numbing." The heads-I-win-tails-you-lose mode of analysis is conspicuous throughout the testimony. The young are depicted as overcome with despair, futurelessness, anomie; even when they seem not to be, they really are, really. To the question of how today's youngsters—despite their constant gazing into the abyss—nevertheless remain conscientious about their studies, Dr. Mack answers by quoting a sociologist who quotes a student who says: "It's the only alternative to despair when the world can blow up at any moment."

The inventor of the term "psychic numbing," Robert J. Lifton, then adds his own testimony. After much talk, again, of research demonstrating the universal sense of doom now found among the young, he tells us of another finding, the rage that the young feel toward the old:

> . . . I have been able to confirm this anger in workshops I have done with young people. Strong rage toward the older generation, toward political leaders who have so much control, as the kids say, over our lives and our deaths. . . .

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We now know that American "kids," despite their "strong rage," gave their support in the November election overwhelmingly to Ronald Reagan, that avatar of "nuclear lunacy," and rejected a Democratic ticket endorsing a nuclear freeze. No doubt Lifton and Mack, if called upon, could provide some fine phrases and fancy inventions to explain this phenomenon, along with a new collection of heartrending excerpts from interviews conducted with youngsters drawn from the better neighborhoods of suburban Boston. There will always be a fresh supply of "kids" to tell us those amazing truths no one else seems to grasp—for example, that a nuclear war would be terrible. But as the repetitive use of the pseudo-chummy "kids" itself suggests, Lifton and Mack are adrift in the past. What they have done is to reinvent the young of the 1960's, the young seen as suffering seers, or as generational Jeremiahs, now adding a new dimension, the young utterly lost to terror and hopelessness.

Those young were fictive in the 1960's, and they are, if anything, more fictive today.

III

WE REMAIN with the question: speaking realistically, how anxious are the American young about a nuclear war? We do not know. They are certainly not in a state of panic, for if they were, we would soon be aware of it, in the reports of parents and teachers, or in the course of psychotherapeutic practice. There is no reason at all to believe that acute anxiety assumes recondite forms, and there are few public signs of the so-called "nuclear nightmare." The only testimony we have comes from those engaged—deeply engaged—in the nuclear-freeze movement; there has been no spontaneous evidence of intense anxiety among children or, for that matter, among adults.

One of the authors of the present essay is a supervisor of psychotherapy, and spends part of each day reading the detailed notes taken by clinical interns. During the past year, in the course of reading well over one thousand pages of such notes, involving more than twenty adult patients, he came across only one mention of a nuclear disaster, and even here the patient was reporting not her own but a friend's anxiety—this, at a time when the nuclear-freeze movement was extremely active locally, and during the period the television drama *The Day After*, depicting the effects of a nuclear attack on an American city, was shown.

Although psychotherapy patients do not usually talk much about current events, they do during periods of national anxiety, e.g., following the Kennedy assassination, and during the Cuban missile crisis. They are also—quite naturally—responsive to news which may affect their personal safety; thus, male homosexual patients became extremely anxious as news of the AIDS syndrome was brought to public attention. So it is difficult to believe that any widespread and deeply felt emotion would fail to appear in psychotherapy. Nor do we see signs of acute nuclear anxiety among children and adolescents. A recent check of a dozen texts in clinical child psychiatry and psychology revealed no mention at all of the topic. The most recent book we have on children's conceptions of death shows them to be rarely associated with war or bombing.

Will this change? No doubt it will. No doubt it already has. The prospect and the horrors of nuclear warfare have been brought to our collective consciousness by the freeze movement; there is an earnest campaign to use the schools to "educate" children, supposedly to reassure them, but in ways that are certain to upset them; and there is, of course, the realistic apprehension all of us share. These elements have produced—and will continue to produce—concern, worry, some anxiety, in a few cases intense fear. That being so, one will be able to "prove" the existence of nuclear anxiety, since it will have become recognized as an appropriate and normal state of mind, hence a legitimate answer to survey questions addressing one's worries.

But bear in mind that at the present time a large number of adolescents also report "world overpopulation" as a significant worry. We may imagine that they think about it every now and again; but it is hard to believe that it is the source of many sleepless nights. Quite clearly, people of all ages will sometimes respond to questions about their worries by taking on the persona of the concerned citizen. That does not mean they are deeply or even moderately anxious in a personal way.

In this connection, we ought to remember that *The Day After* was expected to set off a national epidemic of nervous breakdowns, so much so that hotlines were set up by mental-health experts across the country, hotlines which quickly cooled off when the phones did not ring. That fiasco was instructive in many ways. There was, first of all, no evidence of *any* discernible increase of anxiety, or its derivatives, following the broadcast, which enjoyed the third largest audience of any dramatic program in television history. Indeed, an impact study by a faculty team at George Washington University concluded that the only effect this film had on people's views was one that its producers surely did not expect: "reduced willingness to link President Reagan with nuclear war." As for the hotlines, the researchers drily noted that "psychologists and psychiatrists appear to have spent far more time talking to television-station reporters than to disturbed patients."

Yet a failure of prophecy does not necessarily dissuade belief. The New York *Times*, in a follow-up story, quoted a New York psychiatrist as saying, "We'll never know how many people sought help later." A Yale psychologist went so far as to take credit for the absence of panic: "I had a sense that if we'd done nothing, if we hadn't

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warned parents, that there would have been many more problems than we had." And a former president of the American Psychological Association revealed that the absence of effects showed their presence: "We are seeing the defense mechanism of denial." Heads I win, tails you lose.

IV

WHAT we have here is an example of the easy corruptibility of psychologists and psychiatrists when called into missionary service—a scandal that has now become a commonplace. During the last generation, these disciplines have squandered much of their moral capital by lending themselves eagerly to this or that political cause. In the early years, the sins were venial, stemming from an ingenuousness which did not perceive how silently one's biases can penetrate the design and outcome of research undertaken and carried out in full sincerity. What we encounter more often today is a kind of recklessness, wherein the righteousness of the cause and the felt urgency of its success ride roughshod over any effort at scientific constraint.

The case made at the congressional hearings was thus as flagrant an abuse of scientific testimony as one can imagine, in part because most of the studies mentioned were so wretchedly done, in part because they were surely known to be poor yet were presented nevertheless, in part because the findings offered were themselves *outré*, violating both common sense and common experience, and in part because the political intent of the witnesses was so bald and unconcealed. ("We are hoping," Dr. Mack reported to the Select Committee, "that as this material, this information, comes forth . . . a dialogue about how to approach these very difficult problems such as the United States-Soviet relationship will be looked at in different, more innovative, creative ways so that children won't be so troubled.")

The abuse of science goes hand in glove with another abuse, this one of the legislative process. As some members pointed out, the hearings were clearly outside the mandate given to the Select Committee. The intention of the hearings was to gain publicity for nuclear disarmament, as part of a larger campaign to influence national policy; but since that aim could not be acknowledged, the hearings were legitimated through the invention of a mental-health crisis, with experts and legislators taking turns doing variations on Uriah Heep.

To complete the scenario, one more element was needed, the testimony of the young. And this is the third and most serious abuse, the exploitation of children, both by the organizers of the congressional hearings and by the nuclear-freeze movement more generally.

Why are children brought forward to testify? Quite clearly they are meant to tug at our heartstrings, and to provide some discreetly mawkish television coverage. But there is more to it than that. The child is meant to have a role in a drama wherein head and heart play off against each other.

Nuclear strategy is considered—correctly—to require an extraordinary degree of disinterested intelligence. The prototypical strategist is a Dr. Strangelove figure, that is, a figure yoking the greatest brilliance to cold Machiavellian cunning. The very coldness of the intelligence, moreover, is believed to produce its own form of lunacy, a rationality which turns on itself to become the quintessential irrationality.

To oppose the idea of malevolent intelligence, we need a figure representing guilelessness, an innocence whose purity and perception achieve truth more closely and quickly than mere brilliance can. The child is the exemplary choice; and it is striking how frequently children and the childlike are employed as inherent arguments for nuclear amity. Consider the way President Carter adduced his daughter Amy's ideas on the nuclear-arms race during his presidential debate; or the beatification of Samantha Smith, the child from Maine who visited the Soviet Union at the invitation of Yuri Andropov; or the popularity of Dr. Seuss's children's book on nuclear warfare, *The Butter Battle Book*; or the pilgrimage to Russia undertaken by several American psychiatrists (our own Dr. Mack among them) to interview Soviet youngsters (blond, winsome, soulful) on their yearning for peace.

That we can attain truth more easily through innocence than through intelligence is a notion too sentimental to withstand scrutiny. One must therefore display innocence *an sich*, in its own self. And even then, if the audience should prove skeptical, if it should demand something beyond the iconic, the presentation will not sustain itself and may quite possibly backfire. The hearings themselves provided a telling example of this when one of the youngsters, asked to testify to her fears, revealed upon gentle questioning that her anxieties and concerns, far from being typical, had marked her as an eccentric among her peers. If the audience is more than skeptical, if it is challenging or hostile, the results can be devastating—remember the scorn which greeted Jimmy Carter's invocation of Amy's views. To accept the childlike as testimony or as argument requires a suspension of disbelief. We may be intrigued by the spectacle of a twelve-year-old lecturing U.S. Representatives on Democritus and Einstein; but if we blink once, the spell is gone.

Hence, the career of the prodigy will be vivid yet brief. The child must be forthcoming yet not brassy, bright yet not freaky, articulate yet not overbearing, sincere yet not self-righteous, consistent yet not mechanical, above all, coachable without seeming overcoached. It is not easy; few do it well; and fewer still do it well for very long. Samantha Smith, although carefully managed, soon came to seem artificial and tedious. When she

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testified from her experience that Soviet kids were really neat, really *peace-loving*, just like American kids, her audience may have been credulous enough for a moment to take her at her word; but as soon as she was asked to interpret her experience, to supply some context, to embellish, to defend—in short, to step out of her original role as witness and to assume another as historian or commentator or advocate—the contradictions became all too apparent.

For these reasons, the child must always be displayed narrowly, *qua* child, much as a medieval morality tableau shows figures representing only virtue or other single attributes. To some degree that is true of all public performance, but it is intensified when the performer's appeal rests entirely on his persona. What makes these performances abusive is that they reduce the child's individuality to that persona and in so doing exploit him, in the exact sense—use him for someone else's ends.

WHO are the children so used? With few exceptions, they are the progeny of the "enlightened," from politically active families. The child's views generally reflect the parents', and at times the youngster is little more than the family mouthpiece. At the Committee hearings, one eleven-year-old girl, not far from mute, spoke barely two hundred words, whereupon her father took the stand and rambled on for several pages of transcript.

This is hardly surprising: we now have nearly two decades of good research on the acquisition of political attitudes, and it is clear that there is a strong transmission from parent to child (rather stronger than from peer to peer), especially when the issues are salient and intensely felt. There is, for example, a large parent-child concordance on the question of school prayer, and we would quite likely find a similarly strong correlation within families where there are intense feelings against, say, abortion, and also among those actively committed to the nuclear-freeze movement. As the child psychologist David Elkind has noted: "When issues like nuclear warfare worry and threaten children is when these issues worry and threaten their parents. If parents talk about the threat of war . . . their children become apprehensive."

Elkind's conclusion is supported by the observations of the Harvard psychiatrist Robert Coles, who for the past five years has conducted wide-ranging interviews with more than one hundred children. Among other topics bearing on moral and political belief, he has been probing their thoughts and feelings about the possibility of a nuclear war. Reports the *Harvard Gazette*:

> In the children of the upper-middle class, liberally inclined parents, he found concern, but not the kind of fear "that would get in the way of a generally flourishing life." Among working-class white and black children . . . he found the fear to be practically nonexistent.

To judge by the examples he has provided in a recent manuscript, Coles's interviews promise to be remarkable, ranging as they do from children genuinely haunted by a sort of nuclear nihilism to those voicing an intelligent and forceful patriotism. Coles is clear-headed throughout, never losing sight of the traps lying in wait for the zealous or simpleminded researcher. He reports what a teacher told him about a student of hers whom he had interviewed:

> I heard him at lunch laughing and telling his best friend . . . that he convinced you "the world is coming to an end." . . . Then the friend asked how he knew he had persuaded you. He said he knew because he had met people like you, friends of his parents, and "if you cry, they cry" were his words.

Coles lives in the belly of the beast—he is an Ivy League psychiatrist, a colleague of John Mack and others, and himself a supporter of the nuclear-freeze movement. Nevertheless he has been able to separate his observations from his politics. It is quite plain to him that "the purported fears of American children have been used in a political way." And he warns his colleagues: "If we in the freeze movement continue to assume [these fears] as fact, we have to make sure our facts are in order. If they're not, we're politically and morally on thin ice."

V

THE most serious abuse of children may lie ahead, in the campaigns now being planned to introduce thermonuclear education into the schools. To judge by the curricula so far developed, what lies before us will be perversely iatrogenic, a treatment producing the very disease it is designed to cure, and a course of instruction generating or increasing the anxiety it is allegedly trying to allay.

The parent who places a child hostage to these curricula can expect him to be subjected to a heavy dosage of what can only be called gratuitous sadism. The child (according to the curricular units that have been prepared) will be shown close-up photographs of Hiroshima victims, and given detailed contemporary accounts of that grim event: "A mother driven half-mad while looking for her child was calling his name. At last she found him. His head looked like a boiled octopus"; or, "I was horrified, indeed, at the sight of a stark naked man, standing in the rain with his eyeball in his palm."

If those accents seem vaguely familiar, it is because they recall a classic passage of this century's literature: "The blood seethes and boils in the veins, the brains are boiling in the skull, the heart in the breast glowing and burning, the bowels a red-hot mass of burning pulp, the tender eyes flaming like molten balls"—it is the preacher recounting the torments of hell in James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and doing

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so (as he might tell us) not because he enjoys it but only to instruct the young and to assist in their salvation. And just as the preacher insists that the terrible fires will soon become his listeners' own destiny, so do these curricula strive to bring the nuclear horrors home. The youngster will be taught to "empathize" with the Hiroshima survivors. He will be given a map showing the effects of a megaton bomb in his own community. In some units, children are encouraged to confess their secret fears to the group at large, a tactic almost certain to produce anxiety *de novo*.

Treating the nuclear peril as a discrete curriculum unit in its own right, something to be dropped into place in the social-studies, health, or English class at almost any grade level, means that gross simplifications and omissions inevitably appear. Children are asked to engage in wildly unrealistic intellectual exercises, mostly involving the simulation of analyses of exceedingly complicated matters that even experts find difficult.

These exercises, moreover, are conveniently rendered for classroom use by snatching them from historical context. Thus, a New York City social-studies unit has students appraise the wisdom and morality of Truman's decision to drop the bomb—after admonishing teachers that this decision "was an important step in the arms race which continues to threaten the very survival of mankind." Later, the youngsters are invited to "analyze the relative nuclear strength of the United States and the Soviet Unon," to "assess the legality of using nuclear weapons," to "analyze the psychological changes caused by the bomb and its after-effects," and to "assess the health risks inherent in using nuclear energy."

The didactic parts of these units provide lessons in geopolitics and world history—at about the level of Dr. Seuss's *Butter Battle Book*. *Choices*, the much-publicized contribution of the National Education Association (NEA), to give but one example, looks blandly past any differences between the superpowers. Its one-page "fact sheet" on the USSR simply summarizes population, land area, and military resources. The geopolitical situation of the Soviet Union is captured in an extraordinary sentence: "The Soviet Union is bordered by many countries, including some unfriendly countries and others that are part of the Warsaw Pact, which includes countries that are friendly to the Soviet Union." The beleaguered Soviets are tacitly compared to the United States, which is bordered (we are told) only by "friendly countries." The youngster is thus plainly led to conclude that the Russians have rather more reason to be fearful than the Americans and that the relationship between Washington and Ottawa is indistinguishable from the ties between Moscow and "friendly" Warsaw or Kabul.

As one might expect, the student is told nothing by the NEA "fact sheet" about the two political systems—nothing about the Gulag or the KGB, nothing about internal passports or the control of emigration, nothing about Poland or Afghanistan. It is Dr. Seuss's Yooks against Zooks, two systems morally equivalent, sharing similar goals and policies and strategies, much the same in their domestic and economic priorities.

One curious feature of these curricula is that they encourage youngsters to be passive about their own survival; games and exercises are intended to teach the necessity of nonresistance. But another curious feature moves in the opposite direction altogether. Although it is an axiom of today's educational ethos that on any remotely controversial topic, such as deviant sexuality, schools are to maintain a pose of exquisite neutrality, these curricula openly encourage children to engage in political action. In one instance it is recommended that letters be sent to elected officials and local newspapers; in another, teachers are urged to influence parents "by sharing what we as teachers have discovered about peace and peacemaking." A New York City unit concludes with an "action collage" of bumper stickers, antiwar headlines, "peace walks," and disarmament rallies. Another recommends seven separate projects, one of which is to write to Congressmen about nuclear-power plants in the community.

To sum up: nuclear curricula, presumably designed to ease a child's anxiety, in fact introduce him to fears he has probably not entertained, and exacerbate any that he has. The child is provided with false or misleading political information which makes national policy seem capricious or malevolent or irrational. He is on the one hand taught the virtues of helplessness, on the other recruited to the propaganda purposes of the teacher.

VI

WILL such a curriculum find its way into the schools? It is already beginning to. The NEA has proudly sold thousands of copies of its notorious *Choices* unit, and New York City is not the only school system to be preparing its own packets for teachers. The Washington *Post* reported in mid-1984 that the three huge suburban systems of Montgomery, Prince George's, and Fairfax counties were developing, incorporating, or "piloting" such materials, that the District of Columbia schools had begun to "review and provide information on nuclear-weapons material for their teachers," and that 14,000 Washington students had viewed "*Peace Child*, a musical which raises the nuclear issue." Elsewhere, there is even greater compulsion. In Cambridge, Massachusetts, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, the "school board requires teachers to cover peace and nuclear war from kindergarten through 12th grade."

Certainly conditions are right for this pattern to widen. A number of powerful organizations are pushing hard, above all the NEA, which recently renamed its foreign-affairs staff unit the office of "peace programs and international relations." Like the rest of us, educators fear missing the

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boat, and they are being told that to be anti-nuclear in the classroom is to be with-it. "It's the issue of our time," says a New York school official, "and we have to do more about it." The head of a group called Educators for Social Responsibility echoes the sentiment: "Nuclear war is *the* hot curricular issue." Not only hot but also, *McCall's* recently informed its readers, vital to the well-being of our children: even the tiniest tots will fail to develop adequate "ego ideals" unless they "perceive life as stable and enduring," something that will be possible only if their parents become actively engaged against the nuclear menace.

The private schools have also joined the crusade. The board of the National Association of Independent Schools—it includes virtually all of the traditional prep schools—not long ago urged its members to lead students toward "informed participation as citizens in the consideration of issues of nuclear power and weapons." An article in the journal, after a ritualized caution about the dangers of indoctrination, trots out the usual studies and experts to testify to the widespread terror and mistrust all of us feel. The cover of the magazine depicts a little girl against a backdrop of destruction and death. The Catholic parochial schools are being urged by their own national organization to follow the policy lines set forth by the American bishops in their pastoral letter on war and peace. The journal of the association is filled with lesson suggestions parallel to those offered by the NEA, and some of its leaders are reported (by *Education Week*) as having said that "Roman Catholic schools can no longer call themselves Catholic" if they fail to "infuse" the concepts of "peace and justice" into the training of their students.

More is at work here than a pedagogical passion for current events, controversial issues, or childhood anxieties. The schools obviously cannot and do not incorporate every hot topic into their curricula. If children learn anything in class about the federal budget deficit, for example, it is almost accidental. Other grave concerns, such as the deterioration of the family, are more or less taboo. Nor do instructors routinely base their content selections on pupil worries, else more of them would teach units on "how to avoid being an unpopular adolescent," "why parents sometimes abandon their children," and "what to do when a bully approaches."

TEACHERS have considerable leeway to pick topics that they deem important, so long as they cover the prescribed material and do not violate any of the taboos. In making these choices, the teacher may be influenced by his own politics, by the educational values he acquired in college, by the messages his union transmits, and by such mundane but consequential factors as the availability of curricular material. Over time, however, the most potent force will be the opinion elites in education, arbiters for the whole profession of what is really important and how to think about it.

In these lofty elevations, it is now assumed that schools—public and private, primary and secondary—have a solemn obligation to instruct their students about the nuclear menace. The most prestigious journals in the field—among them the *Phi Delta Kappan*, the (Columbia) *Teachers College Record*, and the *Harvard Educational Review*—have recently suspended their customary standards of balance and scholarship and have given over entire issues to advocacy of the anti-nuclear cause. Many of the articles published in these journals are based upon the scant data and slovenly thinking we have examined here, and some seem to slide into superstition altogether: a piece in the *Phi Delta Kappan*, for example, argued that the recent decline in SAT scores could be accounted for by radioactive fallout affecting the fetal development of those born in the 1950's and the early 1960's.

In this venture the education elite is joined by the "progressive" foundations, themselves ever in search of hot new issues. Witness the president of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund: "The prevention of nuclear war is going to be to the 80's what civil rights was to the 60's, and foundations are increasingly concerned about . . .," etc. The MacArthur Foundation recently committed a staggering $25 million to a group of universities and think-tanks that propose through research and education to reduce the thermonuclear threat. In short, the coffers are open. And if private philanthropy cannot fully meet the demand for grants, fellowships, syllabi, workshops, conferences, what have you, we now have the U.S. government setting up its own cash window, through the United States Institute of Peace, established by Congress this past session in its latest spasm of misguided Wilsonianism. So there will be even more millions available, now carrying a federal seal of approval, for more of the same.

The consequence of all this is easily foreseen: the politicization of education will deepen, as will the electorate's alienation from schools dominated by an ideology so distant from its own. Gazing at this prospect, one wonders, and not for the first time, whether the education elite is entirely bereft of sense—to take on a task hazardous to its students and inimical to the beliefs and values of most Americans, and to do all this just as the schools had finally begun to recover a bit of their lost standing with the public. But then one reflects that this elite helped bring the schools to ruin in the first place, and in much the same way, through seeing them above all else as instruments of its particular idea of salvation.

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The "Real" Marx

Gertrude Himmelfarb

IT USED to be said that the three great giants of modern times—indeed the creators of modernity—were Marx, Darwin, and Freud. In the past few decades we have witnessed major reevaluations and revisions of all three, so that a "classical" Marxist, Darwinist, or Freudian would hardly recognize the doctrines that now pass under their names. Of the three, Marxism has been most thoroughly transformed. In the case of Darwinism and Freudianism, we have been content to expand or modify the doctrine in order to accommodate later findings and theories; what has changed is not our reading of the original doctrine, not our understanding of what Darwin or Freud actually said or meant, but our sense of what we want to retain of these doctrines and what we can now make of them. In the case of Marx, the process of revisionism has been much more radical. For we have actually created—discovered, some would say—a new Marx, a Marx with a new identity, a new ideology, even a new corpus of work. And it is out of this new Marx that a new Marxism has been fashioned.

The Meaning of Karl Marx by Bruce Mazlish* is the latest contribution to this re-creation. Since Mazlish is a distinguished proponent and practitioner of "psychohistory"—the psychoanalytic interpretation of historical persons and events—his rendering of "Marx with a Human Face" (as the title of one chapter puts it) carries a special authority. It is a formidable undertaking, and would be even if the text of the book were several times longer than 150 pages. For it is meant to elucidate not only Marx as a person but Marx as a thinker, the "real meaning," we are told on the first page, of his writings and ideas. And not only Marxism as Marx himself conceived it, but Marxism as it has affected the one-and-a-half or two billion people who are said to be under its sway. Indeed it is the point of this enterprise that the ideas can only be understood in terms of the person, "Marx the humanist" in terms of "Marx the human":

> How else can we understand the real power and meaning of his work, humanist or scientific, except in the light of knowledge of the real, living human being, Karl Marx, as best we can know him historically? While Marxism the "religion" takes on a life—and thus a history—of its own, it all begins in the life of its originator. Marxism, I am arguing, is Marx writ large.

Some of us might answer that rhetorical question differently, believing that the best way to understand the "real power and meaning" of Marx's work (or that of anyone else) is through the work itself, that to try to understand it in terms of the personal life of its "originator" is necessarily reductive and simplistic. We may even suspect that "Marx writ large" is Marxism writ small. But leaving aside that general question, we have enough to do to try to discern the "human face" of Marx and the "humanistic" soul of Marxism.

The book takes a curious turn at the very outset. For it starts not, as one might expect, with the "living human being" but with the doctrine itself, the great "secular religion" of modern times. Moreover, the origins of that religion are located not in Marx's life but in his times, the Industrial Revolution that created a new society which then had to be "validated" by a new religion. Mazlish argues, persuasively, that Marxism, while professedly atheistic, is essentially religious—messianic, eschatological, redemptive, apocalyptic. He finds it ironic that this religion, the great "creative response" to industrialism and urbanism, has had its only real triumphs in the least industralized, least urbanized countries of the world. But he does not explain this fact; nor the equally ironic one that the country that did experience the Industrial Revolution to the fullest was least responsive to that secular religion; nor that the human being who originated that religion did so long before he himself witnessed the Industrial Revolution that presumably inspired it.

When our attention is directed to the author of this doctrine, we are introduced to him first as a nineteen-year-old university student writing poetry to his fiancée. The poems are admittedly derivative and conventional, typical of a familiar kind of adolescent *Weltschmerz*. Yet they are seen as exhibiting the symptoms of "strife" and "alienation," "Promethean" strivings and "romantic anti-capitalist feelings," which are prophetic of that great "epic poem," *Capital*. "The same person," the chapter concludes, "who wrote

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the great Marxist works wrote the awkward, adolescent poems we have been analyzing." But that same person later laughed at them as "youthful follies," and his great friend and collaborator, Friedrich Engels, thought it absurd that anyone should be interested in them.

We are next taken back two years to the seventeen-year-old sitting for his final examinations at the Gymnasium. From the essays written on that occasion—one on the assigned topic, "The Union of Believers with Christ," and another on "The Choice of a Profession"—Mazlish deduces that the young Marx was a "true believer . . . deeply steeped in the Christian tradition," and that this faith was the source of the religious nature both of his vocation and of his teaching. A more cynical reader might regard these papers as exercises in "gradesmanship," the student uttering whatever pieties or platitudes might please the examiner (which these did). One might also think that the case for Marxism as a secular religion rests on the eschatological nature of the doctrine rather than on any dubious assumption about Marx's early beliefs.

The next chapter, promisingly entitled "Father and Son, and the Ghost of Hegel," also relies heavily on a document written for self-serving purposes: a letter written by Marx, then at the University of Berlin, in response to his father's anxieties about his health and career, his mounting debts, dissoluteness, and difficulties with the authorities. (His father had once had to intervene to prevent his arrest on the charge of carrying a gun, and later Karl was imprisoned in the university jail overnight for drunkenness and disturbing the peace.) This letter certainly demonstrates, as Mazlish says, that the young Marx had read Hegel and that he had an exalted sense of himself as being, like the Hegelian Spirit (or like the bohemian "free spirit"), above the petty-bourgeois concerns of his father. But it is less certain that Marx's casual reference to the "turbulent specters" of his restless soul can be "projected" into the "specter" of Communism that he was later to unleash on Europe, or that his reply to his father previewed his own role as the "father" of scientific socialism, "the alienated son of his own earthly father."

It is curious to find so much made of these bits of evidence while so much else of obvious psychological importance is left unexamined. Mazlish boldly states the premise of this study: "Karl Marx's ontogeny recapitulates philosophy's phylogeny." Yet there is remarkably little "ontogeny" here, not even the barest facts of his life, such as that he was the third of nine children and that the first-born, a boy, died a year after Karl was born, which left Karl in the position of the oldest son (a matter of some significance, even in a once-Jewish family). We are told nothing of his relations with his siblings (his sisters remembered him as a "terrible tyrant"); or with his mother, whom he refused to see when she stopped paying his debts and allowance (he was then twenty-four and she a widow in reduced circumstances with five daughters to provide dowries for), and with whom he was reconciled only after she agreed to contribute to his household expenses and advanced part of his inheritance. In passing we are told of his visiting his hometown fifteen years later "on the occasion of his mother's death," but not that he went there only after her death to collect the rest of his inheritance. (One wonders how a biographer, especially a "psychobiographer," could resist relating the prophecy made by Marx's mother long before her death, and mentioned by Marx himself in a letter to his wife, that she would die on the anniversary of her marriage—a prophecy which came true to the very hour.) Again in passing we learn of his father's death while Marx was still at the university, but not that he failed to attend his funeral, nor that he carried his father's photograph with him later in life when he traveled (although he refused, according to his daughter, to show it to strangers, claiming it was not a good likeness).

Marx's wife figures more prominently here. Citing Freud's dictum about the importance of love and work, Mazlish has Marx's wife providing the "firm and lasting" love that permitted him to focus his energies on his work. That love, we are assured, survived all the difficulties of their marriage. The greatest difficulty—long suppressed by family, friends, and biographers—was Marx's affair with Helene Demuth, the family servant ("Lenchen," as she was called), which resulted in the birth of his illegitimate son. Mazlish surmises that this was only a "temporary straying" which did not affect the undying love of wife and husband, and that Marx would have avoided any more permanent affair lest it imperil his marriage. Yet there is reason to think that the "straying" was known to his wife and bitterly resented by her. On one occasion Marx complained to Engels of his wife's "floods of tears"; that letter was written not, as Mazlish says, upon the death of their oldest child (in November 1850), but in July 1851, a few weeks after the birth of Helene's child. To another friend he railed against the "idiotic talebearers" whose colossal "tactlessness" was adding to his wife's misery. A short autobiographical memoir written years later by his wife contains a cryptic allusion to this unhappy summer: and her single passing reference to their lifelong family retainer contrasts sharply with her loving description of Helene's sister, who worked for them only a few years.* Even if the affair was terminated

* If the evidence is inconclusive it is because so much was deliberately destroyed. This memoir, for example, is a thirty-seven page manuscript of which eight pages are missing. Most of Marx's correspondence was destroyed, first by Engels after Marx's death, and then by Marx's daughters after Engels's death.

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after the birth of the child, Lenchen's continued presence in the household might well have been a source of suspicion and jealousy, all the more because the family was so dependent upon her. It was she who dealt with the pawnbrokers, nursed the parents as well as children through their numerous illnesses, and ran the household almost as if she were mistress of the house.

All of this, one might think, would be grist for the psychologist's mill, especially in view of Marx's celebrated pronouncements on the nature of the family. If Marxism is Marx writ large, if there is a necessary "correspondence," as Mazlish claims, between his life and his thought, surely Marx's marital and extramarital affairs must have some bearing on his theory that marriage under capitalism was nothing more than a form of "prostitution." His own experience (as well as that of Engels, whose mistress had been a worker in his father's factory) throws into sharp relief the famous passage in the *Communist Manifesto*: "Our bourgeois, not content with having the wives and daughters of their proletarians at their disposal, not to speak of common prostitutes, take the greatest pleasure in seducing each other's wives." Yet Mazlish is reluctant to establish that "correspondence," concluding his brief account of this passage of the *Manifesto* with the dismissive comment: "Rather than diverting his readers from his main message, however, Marx's animadversions on such subjects were merely titillating."

THERE is another subject, however, on which Marx's "animadversions" cannot be so lightly passed over. By now the evidence of his anti-Semitism has been so amply demonstrated that one should not have to labor the point. It is often said, by way of extenuation, that the animus against Judaism expressed in the essay "On the Jewish Question," published in 1844, was really an attack on religion and capitalism. But this does not gainsay the fact that it was Judaism that Marx singled out as the most heinous form of religion, and that it was the Jews whom he identified with capitalism at its worst. Nor can it be denied that these views were part of the classic repertoire of anti-Semitism:

> What is the worldly religion of the Jew? *Huckstering*. What is his worldly god? Money. . . .
>
> Money is the jealous god of Israel, in face of which no other god may exist. Money degrades all the gods of man—and turns them into commodities. . . .
>
> The bill of exchange is the real god of the Jew. His god is only an illusory bill of exchange. . . .
>
> The *chimerical* nationality of the Jew is the nationality of the merchant, of the man of money in general.

Nor was it only in this essay that Marx presented the Jew as the archetype of the bourgeois. *The German Ideology*, written the following year, compared the attitude of the bourgeois to the institutions of his regime with the attitude of the Jew to the law: "He evades them whenever it is possible to do so in each individual case, but he wants everyone else to observe them." Just as marriage, property, and the family continue to be the conditions of bourgeois existence even when they are violated, so "the constantly evaded law makes the religious Jew a religious Jew." Nor was it only the "young Marx" (he was twenty-six when "On the Jewish Question" was published) who thought so ill of the Jews. One of his articles in the New York *Daily Tribune*, written a dozen years after this essay, was an all too familiar diatribe against Jewish financiers:

> Thus we find every tyrant backed by a Jew, as is every Pope by a Jesuit. In truth, the cravings of oppressors would be hopeless, and the practicability of war out of the question, if there were not an army of Jesuits to smother thought and a handful of Jews to ransack pockets. . . . The fact that 1855 years ago Christ drove the Jewish money-changers out of the temple, and that the money-changers of our age enlisted on the side of tyranny happen again chiefly to be Jews, is perhaps no more than a historical coincidence. The loan-mongering Jews of Europe do only on a large and more obnoxious scale what many others do on one smaller and less significant. But it is only because the Jews are so strong that it is timely and expedient to expose and stigmatize their organization.*

One does not have to be a convert from Judaism to be anti-Semitic. But it surely makes the situation more piquant, especially for the psychobiographer. In a footnote Mazlish refers to Marx's characterization of Ferdinand Lassalle, his socialist "friend," as "the Jewish Nigger." (Marx was as given to racist epithets as to anti-Semitic ones; in Lassalle he saw the worst features of both "races" —the evidence, he said, of the mingling of the races in Moses's time.) But Mazlish's attention is especially caught, in the essay "On the Jewish Question," by the words "egoism" and "money" which Marx "reified" in the Jew. Those words, Mazlish explains, echoed the earlier complaints of his father, as well as the familiar anti-Semitic accusations to which a "Jewish Christian" like Marx was susceptible. To restore his self-esteem, Marx took these sources of "potential self-loathing" and projected them outward. Thus he "stumbled on toward his fruitful insights about society, capitalism, and history." And thus "he, who was alienated from his self, could glimpse the source of alienation in society."

* This article is omitted from both the modern German edition of the *Werke* of Marx and Engels and from the latest English edition of their *Collected Works*, as well as from a volume of their *American Journalism* (although the latter includes it in the appendix listing their contributions to the *Tribune* and attributes it specifically to Marx). My own attention was drawn to it by W. H. Chaloner and W. O. Henderson in *Encounter*.

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But the alienation was more serious than this suggests. For Marx was not only born a Jew; his forefathers, maternal as well as paternal, had for centuries produced an unbroken succession of rabbis. We are told that there were 260 Jews in Marx's hometown, Trier (of a population of 12,000-15,000), but not that his uncle was chief rabbi of that small community during his youth. It is true, as Mazlish says, that many Jews at that time were converted—but not all that many with such a lineage. Disraeli, cited as one of the more prominent converts, did not repudiate his Jewish heritage; on the contrary, he invented one that was more distinguished, and more distinctively Jewish, than his real one. So far from being "alienated" from himself or from Judaism, he proudly affirmed himself to be of the "Hebrew race." What remains to be explained is why one convert's self-esteem was such that he regarded Jews as of a "superior race," while another's could only be restored by projecting his self-hatred onto that "race."

Mazlish recognizes the anti-Semitic stereotype in Marx's "reified" image of the Jew, and even goes so far as to say that his demand for the "emancipation" of mankind from Judaism brings us "close to the ravings of an Adolf Hitler." But he hastens to add that this does not mean that Marx was a Nazi or "even an anti-Semite as such." The overt message of his essay, we are told, is simply that "Judaism is a synonym for capitalism." And the essay itself is "extraordinary" because it combines "the embryos of many of Marx's most important and penetrating mature theories with a farrago of nonsense and almost incredibly bad reasoning." Presumably it is his account of Judaism that is nonsensical, while his account of capitalism foreshadows the best of the "mature" Marx. But if Marx was so incredibly wrong about Judaism, may it not be that he was also wrong about its "synonym," capitalism? If his theory about the Jewish role in capitalism is a "piece of exceptionally poor history," can we be more confident of the role he assigned to the capitalists? It is, after all, this "outstanding historian of capitalism," in the great work of his maturity, who described capitalists as "inwardly circumcised Jews."

In fact the overt message of the essay is not only that Judaism is synonymous with capitalism but that a properly organized society has no room either for the "Sabbath Jew" or for the "secular Jew," either for the Jewish religion or for the capitalism that is presumed to be its true essence. In both senses Judaism is said to represent an "anti-social element" that has to be "abolished." Judaism is thus doubly damned: as a religion that promotes "false consciousness," and as an economic interest that promotes exploitation. And the revolution that is to abolish capitalism will, by the same token, abolish Judaism. Is this not anti-Semitism "as such"? Is it any less anti-Semitic because it condemns Jews as a "class" as well as a religion? Is it not, indeed, more insidious because it gives anti-Semitism a new rationale and thus a new legitimacy and respectability?

MAZLISH's discussion of the essay on Jews appears in the chapter entitled "Marx with a Human Face." It is his thesis that the young Marx who wrote this essay is both the "human" and the "humanistic" Marx. Moreover, this is the "one Marx," the Marx who, in youth as in maturity, was dedicated to the principle of "universal human emancipation." Whatever contradictions there might seem to be between the early writings and the later ones are said to be unified by the "self," the "human being expressing his deepest feelings, wishes, and thoughts in his life work."

This is a curious way to resolve a controversy that has divided Marxist scholars for decades. One suspects that it will not dispose of that controversy, that there will remain those who think it possible for a "self," a "human being," to change his "feelings, wishes, and thoughts" so significantly as to warrant the distinction between "young" and "mature" (or "early" and "late," as is often said). One can even cite Marx and Engels in support of that distinction: the *Communist Manifesto*, for example, where they ridiculed ideas, such as the "alienation of humanity," which they themselves had once espoused; or Engels's refusal to reissue Marx's early writings, recalling that they had willingly abandoned *The German Ideology* to the "gnawings of the mice."

If Mazlish's justification of the "one Marx" theory is less than persuasive, one can nevertheless see why he, like so many commentators these days, insists upon it so strenuously. For this permits the "mature Marx" to be "humanized" by association with the "young Marx." Thus the "scientific socialism" of the *Communist Manifesto, Capital*, and the other later works can be represented as a form of "scientific humanism." Some readers, to be sure, might find it difficult to see evidence of a humanistic Marx even in the young Marx—in his essay on the Jewish question, for example. Yet it is true that compared with his later writings the earlier ones do tend to be less mechanistic, materialistic, and deterministic—less rigorous in assigning a necessary course to history, less insistent upon subsuming individuals under the categories of class, less reductivist in deriving the "superstructure" of society (culture, politics, philosophy, law, social relations, and institutions) from the "means of production." In the present climate of opinion the early Marx is more congenial than the later: "alienation" sounds more profound than "exploitation," and "universal human emancipation" is more agreeable than the "dictatorship of the proletariat." By focusing on the young Marx, one can dissociate oneself not only from the Marxism that has become an instrument of

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tyranny, but also from the Marxist theories that have been so conspicuously belied by history: the polarization of classes and pauperization of the proletariat, the collapse of capitalism and universal triumph of Communism, the withering away of the state and emergence of a classless society.*

THE psychobiographer has additional reason to subscribe to the "one Marx" theory. It is difficult enough to establish any plausible correspondence between the life and thought of a "unified" self, still more difficult to establish such a correspondence in the case of a thinker whose ideas changed significantly. What was there in Marx's personal life to make him reject the Young Hegelianism of his youth and embrace the deterministic, materialistic creed of "classic" Marxism? And what induced him to deny, so systematically and ruthlessly, the realities of his own life? This denial may be the most significant psychological fact about him. For Marx was a philosopher who denied the legitimacy of philosophy, an intellectual who denied the autonomy of ideas, a materialist who denied the materialistic basis of his own life and thought, an atheist who denied the religion of his youth as well as that of his forefathers, a revolutionary who denied any saving grace, any redemptive value, to his own class, to his native land, to the country that gave him refuge, to the world that, by his own account, made him what he was.

It is here that the psychologist has most to contribute to our understanding of Marx, for he is an expert on the phenomenon of "denial." In a footnote Mazlish comments on the pattern in Marx's "repudiations": "Unable himself to be an academic philosopher, he demands the abolition of philosophy. It is as if he were saying, 'If I can't be a philosopher, nobody will be one.'" Marx was indeed a philosopher, even, in a sense, an "academic" one. In denying the reality of philosophy, he was denying the very "self" that is invoked as the unifying principle of his life and thought.

The same footnote comments on Marx's habit of turning against his mentors and destroying them. This "cannibalistic trait" is said to be part of his "enormous creativity, a lived dialectic." But this does not quite account for the nastiness of his polemics (especially against those from whom he had learned and borrowed most), the *ad-hominem* nature of his arguments (the name-calling and mockery), or the obsessive length to which he carried his feuds. Nor does it account for the scatological quality of so much of his rhetoric. A casual reader might find nothing offensive in his remark to his daughter: "I am a machine condemned to devour books and then to hurl them transformed onto the dunghill of history"; or in his letter commiserating with Engels on the death of his mistress, Mary Burns, who had given him a home "free and secluded from human filth" (*Menschendreck*). But a psychologist might find some significance in the persistent use of such language, might even be given pause by a "humanistic" Marx who could speak so casually of "human filth." (The letter to Engels deserves mention if only because Engels was so deeply offended by it. Except for this callous postscript referring to Mary Burns, the letter was almost entirely devoted to a recital of Marx's own financial difficulties.)

It was not only in private discourse that Marx lapsed into gutter language. Some of the most blatant examples appear in *Herr Vogt*, a two-hundred page book upon which he expended much time and effort and which he printed at his own expense. (This is not a work of juvenilia; it was written in 1860, between the *Critique of Political Economy* and *Capital*.) The book contains, among other choice specimens of vituperation, an attack on Moses Levy, the editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, who had incurred Marx's wrath by criticizing two of his articles. Marx jeers at Levy for trying to pass himself off as an "Anglo-Saxon" by changing his name from Levi to Levy, when "Mother Nature in extravagantly Gothic writing had inscribed his family tree in the middle of his face." (Of the 22,000 Levis [Levites] whom Moses led in the wilderness, Marx remarks, not a single one spelled his name with a "y." One recalls that Marx's own grandfather was a Levi and that "Marx" itself was a Germanized version of Mordechai.) He then goes on to describe at some length that organ in the middle of the face —"an elephant's trunk, antenna, lighthouse, and telegraph"—which permits Levy to sniff out dirty smells a hundred miles away. It is no exaggeration, Marx assures the reader, to say that "Levy writes his paper with his nose." And the paper itself (here the metaphor changes slightly) is nothing else than a stinking sewer:

> By means of an ingenious system of concealed plumbing, all the lavatories of London empty their physical refuse into the Thames. In the same way every day the capital of the world spews out all its social refuse through a system of goose quills, and it pours out into a great central paper sewer—the *Daily Telegraph*. Liebig rightly criticizes the senseless wastefulness which robs the Thames of its purity and the English soil of its manure. Levy, however, the proprietor of this central paper sewer, is an expert not only in chemistry, but even in alchemy.

* It is important to remember that the only Marx known to Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, and Mao, who proudly bore the banner of Marxism and made it the official creed of "almost half the planetary inhabitants," was the later Marx. Only in the 1930's did most of the writings of the young Marx begin to be published, and only after World War II did they become well known. One of the few early writings that was available was "On the Jewish Question," which was reprinted in the German socialist press toward the end of the 19th century and was widely quoted and praised.

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Having transformed the social refuse of London into newspaper articles, he transforms the newspaper articles into copper, and finally the copper into gold. At the entrance which leads to the central paper sewer, the following words are written *di colore oscuro*: "*hic . . . quisquam faxit oletum*," or as Byron translated it so poetically: "Wanderer, stop and—piss!"*

There are other subjects that might intrigue a psychologist—the carbuncles, for example, which plagued Marx intermittently for almost thirty years. These festering, ulcerous sores, emitting a stench almost as disagreeable as the pain itself, afflicted at one time or another almost every part of his body—his eyes, mouth, and ears, his chest, buttocks, even his penis. The attacks were worse during the writing of *Capital*, provoking the often-quoted remark to Engels: "Whatever happens, I hope the bourgeoisie, as long as they exist, will have cause to remember my carbuncles." Surely those carbuncles deserve more than the casual comment that they "now seem to us psychosomatic," or the reference to Marx, at the very end of the book, as "that great creative spirit with carbuncles."

THE lacunae in this study become more perplexing when one considers Mazlish's early work. Mazlish has been the most dedicated and prolific of psychohistorians, applying the theories of psychoanalysis to historical and contemporary subjects alike: James Mill and John Stuart Mill, Nixon, Kissinger, and Carter, and a group of "revolutionary ascetics" ranging from Cromwell and Robespierre to Lenin and Mao. These books utilize such familiar Freudian concepts as the Oedipus conflict and sibling rivalry, aggression and regression, repression and sublimation, compensation and displacement, transference and overdetermination, anality and orality, masculinity and femininity. It may seem churlish, for someone who found these concepts applied mechanically and arbitrarily in the other cases, to point out now that they have not been applied at all. Yet their absence—like the dog that did not bark in the night—may be the clue to some of the oddities of the book.

In a single parenthetical statement, midway in the introduction, Mazlish explains that this is not intended as a "psychohistorical study":

(I might add that my attention to Marx's individuality is not in terms of a psychohistorical study. Such a study, unlike this one, aims at a systematic application of specific psychological concepts and theories to its subject. I must also add that I cannot imagine any historical treatment, mine included, that is not informed by a particular sort of psychological understanding.)

It is a tantalizing statement. What is one to make of a study of Marx's "individuality" which is not "psychohistorical" but is "informed" by a particular "psychological understanding"? If it is a different "understanding" from that provided by psychoanalysis, which Mazlish has always insisted upon as the basis of psychohistory, might we not expect to be told what that new understanding is? And if he is still committed to psychoanalysis, how can an adequate study of Marx as a "living human being" be "informed" by that theory, yet forgo all the concepts crucial to it? The issue goes beyond this book, for it involves not only our understanding of the "real meaning" of Marx, which is a serious enough matter, but also our understanding of psychohistory. In his book on Nixon—the "real" Nixon, as he then said—Mazlish argued that psychohistory is more scientific than conventional history because it is based on psychoanalysis, which is a "scientific system of concepts, based on clinical data." Is he now retreating from that claim? Is he suggesting that we can understand the "real" Marx without inquiring into his infancy and childhood, or his relations with his mother and siblings, or his "psychosomatic" ailments?

Or is all this only a temporary retreat, a prudential suspension of the doctrine in the interests of some immediate purpose—the purpose, perhaps, of creating a "Marx with a human face," without the warts (and carbuncles) that might disfigure that face? A comparison of this book with the earlier ones is suggestive. In the case of John Stuart Mill, for example, Mazlish made much of the phrase "lower classes" (which, in fact, Mill did not use) as symptomatic of Mill's aversion both to the populace and to sex—"lower" signifying the "baser" parts of the body, thus implying that sexuality is "low" or "dirty." Here there is no mention of a more dramatic example of such imagery: Marx's famous description of the "lumpenproletariat" as "the 'dangerous class,' the social scum, that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of old society." Nor are there any specimens of Marx's scatological-*cum*-sexual imagery. Imagine what Mazlish would have made of a similar quotation from Nixon:

You know that Heine is dead, but you do not know that Ludwig Simon of Trier had pissed on his grave—I meant to say, passed water—in the New York *Neue Zeit*. . . . The poet or troubadour of the Jewess Madame High-shit, High-ash, or High-lime of Frankfurt am Main discovers, naturally, that Heine was no poet. He had "no soul," was full of "malevolence," and slandered not only Kobe's but even Berne's lady-friend, the great Berne's "mouse," muse, or cunt, the Strauss woman.

* The original Latin phrase, from Persius's *Satires*, includes the word *veto*: "Here it is forbidden to defecate." In Marx's rendition, it becomes: "Here it is permitted to defecate." In this instance and many others, the translation in the English edition has been much sanitized.

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Or imagine what he would have said had any of his other subjects been dependent on the largesse of another man? Or had any of them fathered an illegitimate son who was banished in infancy and totally ignored, without any hint of remorse or guilt? Or had two of their daughters, their only surviving children, committed suicide?

Nixon's anti-Communism was explained as a reflection of his "authoritarian personality" and "paranoiac fears." But Marx's Communism is not seen as a reflection of his "dictatorial character"; nor, in spite of his notoriously bad relations with other socialists, is there any intimation that he was paranoiac. Nor is there any psychoanalytic interpretation of his crucial ideas. In the book on James and John Stuart Mill, political economy is identified with the libido economy, money with semen, spending with ejaculating, saving with abstinence, capitalist entrepreneurs with phallic types. Here there are no such interpretations, surplus value, for example, appearing in its conventional form as a purely economic concept. And *Capital* itself is treated not psychoanalytically but historically, even theologically: this "magnificent historical drama" is "the story of how capitalists exploited the workers in 19th-century England"; it is Marx's chosen instrument in his eschatological mission, the "Worker's Bible" rescuing man from the purgatory of capitalism and showing him the way to his "future salvation."

This view of *Capital* would hardly survive the kind of psychoanalytic treatment accorded the Mills. If surplus value is related to sexual abstinence, what does this do to the drama of exploitation and redemption? If capitalist entrepreneurs are phallic types, what does this make of the workers—or, indeed, of socialists who would abolish capitalist enterprise? It has, in fact, been suggested by others that socialism represents a "feminization" of politics and society; but this is not the conclusion we are expected to draw from his work.

MAZLISH's own conclusion is quite explicit. Marx, we are told in the epilogue, was "a great creative battler, always striving for a better world." As a doctrine or ideology, to be sure, Marxism is "outmoded." (So, Mazlish hastens to add, is capitalist ideology.) But however outmoded, Marxism is with us today and we must accommodate to it. The slogan "Better dead than Red" is the invention of "violent anti-Marxists" who believe that Communism is a "monstrous evil, a world in the hands of the devil"; rather than living with that evil, they prefer to "bring the world crashing down on all our heads." Against that "simple-minded notion," Mazlish argues that Marxism is not "evil incarnate," that whatever its flaws, it remains "a *human*, not inhuman, creation, with the potentiality for creating viable cultures . . . , one among a number of current ways of organizing human societies." The problems confronting humanity today go beyond the "quarrels" of capitalism and Communism; they have to do with overpopulation, depletion of resources, pollution, and above all nuclear holocaust. In the face of such pressing concerns, "détente, coexistence, whatever one may call it, is the order of the day." This policy should be carried out not grudgingly but wholeheartedly, in the "spirit of mutuality," the spirit of Marx's favorite maxim, "Nothing human is alien to me." As Marx wrestled with the crisis of his time, so we must with ours. "This is the final meaning inhering in the life and work of Karl Marx."

And this is the final sentence and message of this book. One wonders what Marx himself would have made of it—Marx whose entire work was dedicated to the proposition that Communism could not coexist with capitalism, that the struggle between the two was a struggle unto death (the death, needless to say, of capitalism), and whose personal life testified to his own inability to coexist even with his fellow socialists, let alone with the class enemy. One also wonders whether any of the critics of "détente, coexistence, whatever one may call it" (appeasement, perhaps?) could be quite as simple-minded and inhuman as those "violent anti-Marxists" who want to bring the world "crashing down on our heads," or whether there is not something egregiously simple-minded and inhuman about a catalogue of the urgent problems of our time that includes pollution but not freedom or democracy.

It would be charitable to ignore the epilogue, if it did not help account for so much that is unsatisfactory in the book as a whole. For that political message explains the inadequate, curiously half-hearted psychological analysis. Any serious psychological study, certainly any psychoanalytical study, would reveal a "human" Marx who is, alas, all too human—which is to say, a human being with more than his share of faults and vices. So too any serious intellectual study would reveal a Marx whose writings (especially his major, "mature" writings) are so deterministic and materialistic, so uncompromising in denying the autonomy of mind, religion, law, government, literature, morals, as to forfeit the title of "humanist."

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Paul Celan: The Strain of Jewishness

John Felstiner

I

WHEN Paul Celan drowned in the Seine in 1970, a suicide at forty-nine, his loss hit hard the many Europeans, Israelis, and Americans who prized a voice that had suffered the Jewish catastrophe and resisted falling mute. Celan by 1945 had lost parents, cultural matrix, Bukovina homeland, everything except the German mother tongue. With all his pain and uncertainty, and in a language that had passed, he once said, "through the thousand darknesses of deathbringing speech," he still made poems:

Speak—
But don't split no from yes.
And give what you say this meaning:
give it the shadow.*

With Celan gone, a thread had snapped. One of his most brilliant interpreters, the Hungarian Jewish critic Peter Szondi, followed him the next year and took his own life by drowning.

Another one of those struck most forcibly by Celan's death was the great cultural historian Erich Kahler, a German-speaking Jew born in Prague in 1885. Kahler on his deathbed in May 1970, as Joseph Frank describes it, "spoke not of himself but, with his hands clasped before him as if in prayer, and with a passion that made his voice tremble and tears come to his eyes, of the terrible psychic burden—the burden of being both a great German poet and a young Central European Jew growing up in the shadow of the concentration camps—which had led to the suicide of Paul Celan." It is an arresting moment: Kahler the émigré in Princeton, friend of Albert Einstein, Thomas Mann, Hermann Broch, Erich Auerbach, author of *The Tower and the Abyss* and *Man the Measure*, lying anguished at the suicide of a poet from Bukovina whose language could no longer bear him through exile.

Celan never really thought of himself as a "German" poet, though the adjective describes a language as well as a nation. What then was he? A poet, above all, but whose? Many different claims are in the air, some more valid than others, and all testifying to a migrant destiny. Paul Celan stemmed from Czernowitz in Bukovina, a province that passed from the Austrian empire to Rumania and ultimately to the Soviet Union late in World War II, when he abandoned his homeland for Bucharest, then fled to Vienna in 1947 and soon after settled in Paris, journeying often to Germany for readings and in 1969 to Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, briefly but intensively. So Czernowitz, Bucharest, Vienna, France, Germany, and Israel all bear upon his life and work, but no one place really identifies him. Nor does any one of the adjectives that his poetry has evoked: surrealist, engagé, hermetic, mystical, metapoetic. Beneath and beyond all these various identities, I believe, runs Paul Celan's Jewishness. He was perforce a Jewish poet: that is, a poet and a Jew of his time —the two destinies drastically interpenetrating so that any other definition seems partial.

Now I realize that to begin by specifying a writer's suicide and his Jewishness doubly preconditions our sense of him. Approaching by way of Celan's tragic final choice may falsely shape and color a quarter-century's accomplished work. Almost inevitably, though, his suicide has put a seal on that career, even in the minds of people who knew him before he died. And it is hard to hear or read his poems without at least an overtone of foreboding.

Celan felt himself mortally implicated from the start. In his most famous poem, *Todesfuge*, "Deathfugue," written in late 1944 or early '45, his instinct is to take on the fate of Nazism's Jewish victims. He speaks not for them but through them:

Black milk of daybreak we drink you at night
we drink you at morning and midday we drink
you at evening
we drink and we drink.

That present tense of Jewish fatality never let him free.

Destruction thrust upon Celan, among countless other Jews of his generation, a destiny and an identity he would never have realized within

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* The translations throughout are my own.

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a Europe free of the twelve-year Reich. So calling him a Jewish poet brings out first a historical imprint. Then the delicate question arises, what Jewish identity do his poems themselves create? No consensus emerges from the critical literature, which can treat the same poem with anything from loyal Jewish exegesis to a purebred phenomenology that proceeds as if anti-Semitism had petered out in the pages of *Mein Kampf*. One collection in particular, *Die Niemandsrose* ("The No-One's-Rose"), which Celan wrote from 1960 to 1962, abounds in Jewish terms, images, themes. Yet even these build their energy by oscillating between prayer and revolt: "Blessed art thou, No One." What I would call the "strain" of Jewishness in Paul Celan can be heard with a sharp double entendre on that word. He knew well enough the burden of being Jewish, and avoided any religiosity, but a Jew he had to be and chose to be. A tenuous, an attenuated strain at times, and yet a tough one: sometimes it was all he felt he had.

II

About the story of his life Paul Celan—born Paul Antschel—remained reticent, sparing, and the precious little we know from his own mouth comes as oblique, fragmentary glimpses in his conversations, letters, talks, poems. Before he turned twenty-one, his had become a life at risk, its worst realities inaccessible to ready speech or memory. And probably the substance even of his prewar childhood came to feel irretrievably lost.

Unfortunately we lack from Celan—he never could have brought himself to compose—anything like Franz Kafka's *Letter to His Father* (1919) or Osip Mandelstam's *The Noise of Time* (1925), retrospections on their middle-class European Jewish upbringing. Kafka and Mandelstam figured powerfully as tutelary spirits for Celan, true writers also touching his fate as a Jew. Yet his own recovery of a childhood wiped out by Nazism would not have exhibited quite their ambivalence tinged with disgust at the loose ends of Central European Jewish assimilation.

For one thing, Paul's father, along with a desire that his son should speak pure German and receive the best secular education, had a strong Orthodox upbringing and Zionist conviction: the boy, an only child, felt the burden of these but the influence as well. Also, his mother kept a kosher household and lit Sabbath candles —the memory of them filters through in Celan's poetry. On both sides of the family, he knew his ancestors to be religious Jews. Celan told some friends in Stuttgart, in March 1970, about his learned grandfather from Bukovina and his maternal great-grandfather, a Hasid who made the pilgrimage from Galicia in Poland to Safed in Palestine. During World War I both families fled the Russians, and Paul's father was wounded serving the Austrian *Vaterland*. There is a photo of his mother at about twenty-one, with full soft features and a warm gaze, well-dressed, her hand in a suede glove resting on a book. On the back of the photo is written, "Mama, during the First World War, in Bohemia"; and the handwriting (as well as the choice of words) dates from after the next war, the war from which such refuge proved impossible.

Paul Antschel's childhood (he was born in 1920) coincided with the rise of Rumania's Iron Guard and fascist anti-Semitism, which ranged from virulent to violent. In Czernowitz, nearly half populated by Jews, he learned Rumanian at school, studied French ardently, and for three years attended the Hebrew school Safah Ivriah, which Chaim Weizmann had visited not long before. In January 1934, two months after becoming Bar Mitzvah, Paul wrote to his Aunt Minna who had recently emigrated to Palestine. To explain why he has been ranked second in class and not first, where he deserves to be, he cites his "belonging to the *Jewish* branch of the *Semitic* race"—with "Jewish" and "Semitic" mock-legalistically underlined. "As for anti-Semitism in our school," he tells her, "I could write a 300-page opus about it." The boy closes his letter by asking how her languages are coming: "*Wie geht's mit den Sprachen? Speake-you English? Und Hebräisch?*"

Against the background of Nazism, Paul's own teen-age political affinities—a mixture of anarchism, socialism, and Communism—appear humane and precarious. His friends have testified to these affinities—he was known as a Trotskyite, one man has told me—as do various hints Celan gave in later years. He once spoke of growing up with the writings of the anarchist Peter Kropotkin and the socialist Gustav Landauer, and a late poem explores Rosa Luxemburg's death; he remembered learning a Viennese "Solidarity" song as a boy. In 1935 he belonged to an illegal anti-fascist youth group attended mostly by Jews, and in '36 he collected funds for the Spanish Republicans—years later their rallying cry, *No pasarán*, turned up twice in his poems.

After graduating from school in 1938, he decided to study medicine in France. His train left Czernowitz on November 9 and stopped in Berlin the day after *Kristallnacht*. As Celan years later evokes it,

> some smoke came into sight
> already from tomorrow,

and such a glancing recollection opens up all the more acutely that stunning moment, the beginning of the end of European Jewish life. The next summer, with war imminent, Paul Antschel returned home from France and began studying Romance philology. Then, before long, Stalin and Hitler took over his education.

Red Army troops entered Czernowitz in June 1940, and while Soviet reforms in the university hobbled Paul's studies, the occupation accelerated his command of Russian. At the same time, he

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came to know a young actress in the Yiddish State Theater, and through her several Yiddish literary figures, but he does not seem to have developed a particular love for that language. He was already writing copiously in his *Muttersprache*, the mother tongue also of Hölderlin, Rilke, and Trakl. Possibly this allegiance to German lay somewhere beneath his decision to stay in Czernowitz as the Nazi invasion threatened, rather then fleeing with the Russians like some of his friends. But expectations of any sort were strangled when *Einsatzkommando* 10B, part of *Einsatzgruppe* D under Otto Ohlendorf, entered the city on July 5, 1941. Burning of the Great Synagogue, plundering and atrocities, torture and mass killing, ghetto, deportation to Transnistria: with avid help from Rumanian troops, the SS set about obliterating a 500-year Jewish presence.

As for the private contours of this public trauma, Paul Antschel fared better than some and worse than other Rumanian Jews—which is to say, he found the war years unspeakable. At first he was set to work hauling debris from the Prut River bridge; later he had a job collecting and destroying Russian books. In late June 1942, in a sudden *Aktion*, the Nazis again began deportations across the Dniester River into the German-occupied Ukraine. Paul sought refuge, but his mother reportedly said, "We can't escape our fate. After all, a lot of Jews are already living in Transnistria."

By chance, the son was not picked up. His parents had an arduous journey in cattle cars to the Bug River and were put to roadwork under brutal conditions. One autumn day in 1942, it seems, a letter came from Paul's mother—the only one he was to get—saying that his father, totally spent, had been shot to death, and asking the son to send her a shawl against the cold. The mother's words take form in a poem he wrote not long after, "Black Flakes":

"Remember it's Winter here too, for the
thousandth time now
in the land where the broadest river flows:
Jacob's heavenly blood blessed by axes . . .
Oh ice of unearthly red—their Hetman with all
his troop
wades into darkening suns . . . Oh child, a shawl
to wrap myself in when it's flashing with
helmets,
when the rosy floe cracks up, when the
snowdrift sifts
your father's bones, hooves crushing
the Song of the Cedar . . .
A shawl, just a small one. . . ."

This poem's imaginative response seems all the more astonishing for having arisen amid war, occupation, and forced labor. To link his parents' suffering with the massacres of 1648 and the Cossack Hetman, Khmelnitsky, must have taken a painful grasp of Jewish persecution and endurance, as it also did to mention the Song of the Cedar, the late-19th-century Zionist anthem which runs: "There where the slender cedar kisses the skies . . . there on the blue sea's shore my homeland lies." It would be decades before Celan ventured to that shore. Perhaps his despairing image, "hooves crushing the Song of the Cedar," helps explain why.

Toward winter 1942, from an escaped cousin, he had news of his mother, killed by the SS. To voice that unheard-of loss, I suspect he needed a measured rhythm and traditional stanzas. These are reminiscent of Rumanian folk verse:

ASPEN TREE, your leaves glint white into the
dark.
My mother's hair never grew white.

Dandelion, so green is the Ukraine.
My fairhaired mother did not come home.

Rain cloud, do you linger over the well?
My tender mother weeps for all.

Rounded star, you coil the golden loop.
My mother's heart was struck by lead.

Oaken door, who hove you off your hinges?
My gentle mother can not come.

And here are some stanzas from another early pastoral elegy, "Nearness of Graves," whose traditional harmonies I feel bound to convey in translation because they gave grief a way to move:

Still do the southerly Bug waters know,
Mother, the wave whose blows wounded you so?

. . .

Can none of the aspens and none of the willows
reach you their solace, remove all your sorrows?

. . .

And Mother, you bear it, as once on a time,
the gentle, the German, the pain-laden rhyme?

The question in this last couplet, stretching German between the gentleness of his mother's tongue and the pain of her murderers' tongue, would reverberate throughout everything Celan wrote.

How could a Jew go on writing poems in German?

Whichever stone you lift—
you lay bare
those who need the protection of stones,

begins a later poem, and it ends:

Whichever word you speak—
you owe to
destruction.

And yet you speak. Where his parents were lost, there he sought words for that loss. Because he could not bear to remember the Jewish dead or to forget them either, and because he could neither embrace nor let go of German, Celan went on to write a poetry that strains language even beyond the breaking point and insists on irreconcilables as truths. After "that which happened," as he called what we nowadays call the Holocaust, Celan gave to his poetry the same dark sense he

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survived with as a Jew—the sense that only stark contradiction could render truth:

You prayer-, you blasphemy-, you
prayer-sharp knives
of my
silence.

You my words going
crippled with me, you
my straight ones.

III

BY THE time both his parents were killed, Paul had been at forced labor for months, 400 kilometers south of Czernowitz. "I have seen life exchanged for utmost bitterness," he wrote from the camp to a friend, and began sending her poems and his translations of Shakespeare sonnets. He worked in various camps for eighteen months. Then sometime in late 1943—the date and circumstances remain unclear—he escaped to the Red Army, served as a medical orderly in Kiev, and finally returned to Czernowitz—now Chernovtsy, a liberated city; but what with forced labor yet again and the threat of Soviet military conscription, it was not a good time. "The blood-brimming helmet is fallen: what blossom can bloom?" he begins a 1944 poem called "Russian Spring"—". . . and must I still wrestle with Jacob's angels? / You're weeping, beloved, I know it, alone with the Jewish graves." Persecution and suffering had been working a change in him: he began reading Martin Buber, recalled his Hebrew training, and became more sensitive to Yiddish, a language his fellow prisoners had given him occasion to learn. He also took up English studies, and friends remember his "captivating" recitations of Shakespeare sonnets. Those at least still held good.

Probably the strongest imprint on that spring of 1944 came from survivors he listened to:

Schwarze Milch der Frühe wir trinken sie abends
wir trinken sie mittags und morgens wir trinken sie nachts
wir trinken und trinken . . .

Black milk of daybreak we drink it at evening
we drink it at midday and morning we drink it at night
we drink and we drink
we shovel a grave in the sky there we won't feel crammed in
A man lives in the house he plays with his vipers he writes
he writes when it grows dark to Deutschland your golden hair Marguerite
he writes it and steps out of doors and the stars are all twinkling he whistles his hounds to come close
he whistles his Jews into rows has them shovel a grave in the ground
he orders us strike up and play for the dance.

These lines, and the three stanzas that follow from them, Paul Antschel may have composed as early as the summer before the war ended. How could he manage such concerted verse—then? Or could he perhaps do only that? It would be edifying to dwell for a while within the imagination of a young poet, a wartime orphan, filtering the words and images of other survivors through his own raw memories and shaping a voice out of it all:

Black milk of daybreak we drink you at night
we drink you at morning and midday we drink you at evening
we drink and we drink
A man lives in the house he plays with his vipers he writes
he writes when it grows dark to Deutschland your golden hair Marguerite
your ashen hair Shulamith we shovel a grave in the sky there we won't feel crammed in
He shouts jab the earth deeper you there you others sing up and play
he grabs for the rod in his belt he swings it his eyes are blue
jab your spades deeper you there you others play on for the dance.

At first he called this poem *Todestango*, "Tango of Death"—an endless irony, yet grounded in fact. At the Janov Street camp in Lemberg, Jews awaiting "Selection" listened to a fiddler play *Das Todestango*, whose music was taken from the Argentine Eduardo Bianco's greatest prewar hit. Bianco's band had played in Paris while Paul was there, and later in 1939 entertained Hitler and Goebbels. One can only guess (though it seems a violation to do so) at a prisoner's mind, experiencing imminent death to the suave, shapely rhythms of the tango. And that torn mind the poet somehow gave voice and form to, as in his poem's coda—

dein goldenes Haar Margarete
dein aschenes Haar Sulamith—

where the Nazi commandant's fair-haired Gretchen and the ash-haired Shulamith couple *Faust* with the Songs of Songs in an impossible, irreconcilable chord.

Not long after writing this poem, Paul abandoned his Bukovina homeland, now incorporated into the Ukraine, for Bucharest. He joined a surrealist circle, became friends with the leading Rumanian Jewish writers, and earned a living by translating from Russian into Rumanian—notably Lermontov, Simonov, and Chekhov. In publishing these translations he used various pseudonyms, probably because Antschel sounded too German and too Jewish for Rumanian consumption. In May 1947 his first published poem appeared under the name of Paul Celan—an anagram on Ancel, the Rumanian spelling of his family name. And the poem appeared not in German but in translation: *Tangoul Mortii*, a Rumanian version of the *Todestango* by his friend Petre Solomon. Because in 1947 the niceties of Nazi terror were

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either unknown or unbelievable, and possibly also because poems such as one called "The Tractor" were beginning to appear in the same magazine, Celan's editor assured his readers that *Tangoul Mortii* was indeed factual—that yes, in Maidanek and elsewhere, some prisoners had to make music while others dug graves.

Just before the Rumanian king abdicated under Communist pressure in December 1947 and a People's Republic was declared, Celan fled Bucharest without papers but with a knapsack of poems, and made a "dreadfully hard journey" across Hungary to Vienna, the lodestar of his childhood. There his poetry was well received and he put together a collection, *The Sand from the Urns*, which he closed with the poem now entitled *Todesfuge*, "Deathfugue"—the change from tango to fugue insisting, ever since, that the country that fostered Bach had fashioned the Final Solution as well. In Vienna, Celan was wary of what his acquaintances had done during the war. The Surrealist painter who befriended him, Edgar Jené, was "definitely free of prejudice," Celan said in a letter; but when a certain author praised him to the skies, Celan thought that this man, who had run the Viennese radio's literature program under the Nazis, back then "would probably have had other things to do than speak this way to a Jewish poet."

In July 1948 Celan visited an eminent Austrian man of letters, who welcomed him as the heir to Else Lasker-Schüler. "What pleased me especially," Celan wrote to his Rumanian Jewish mentor Alfred Margul-Sperber, "was that he wholly entered into the Jewishness of my poems—as you well know, that counts a great deal to me." Later that month he left Vienna and settled in Paris, among fellow refugees and exiles but really quite alone in a difficult time. After a couple of weeks he wrote to relatives in the new state of Israel: "Perhaps I am one of the last who must live out to the end the destiny of the Jewish spirit in Europe . . . and that may be saying a lot."

"A DARK and shadow year," Celan called 1949 in Paris. One of the first poems he wrote then forms an intimate and scrupulous response to the strain of exile. Entitled "In Egypt," it echoes the decalogue:

Thou shalt say to the eye of the woman
stranger: Be the water.
Thou shalt seek in the stranger's eye those thou
knowest are in the water.
Thou shalt summon them from the water:
Ruth! Naomi! Miriam!
Thou shalt adorn them when thou liest with
the stranger.
Thou shalt adorn them with the stranger's
cloud-hair.
Thou shalt say to Ruth and Miriam and Naomi:
Behold, I sleep with her!
Thou shalt most beautifully adorn the woman
stranger near thee.
Thou shalt adorn her with sorrow for Ruth,
for Miriam and Naomi.
Thou shalt say to the stranger:
Behold, I slept with them!

Written within six months after reaching Paris, this poem shifts revealingly between a Jewish perspective and the exile's personal plight, ending in sudden sorrow and affinity for Ruth, Miriam, Naomi. The scars from Celan's recent past had not healed—in fact they never did, which gives his poems their cutting edge—so that his autobiographical note for the West German magazine that published "In Egypt" includes this slender sentence: "What the life of a Jew was like during the war years, I do not need to mention."

While in Paris, Celan worked at a factory job, produced German translations from Rumanian, French, and English, and began studying philology and German literature—an unusual choice for anyone at that time. In 1952 he married Gisèle de Lestrange, a gifted graphic artist from a French Catholic noble family. That year he was also invited to read for Germany's Group 47, and then a Stuttgart publisher brought out his book *Mohn und Gedächtnis*, with *Todesfuge* again singled out. The conjunction in this book's title, "Poppy and Remembrance," shows Celan held as ever by the presence of an intolerable past. He begins the last poem in *Mohn und Gedächtnis* by awakening memory:

Count up the almonds,
count what was bitter and kept you waking,
count me among them.

Blooming earliest in the land of Israel, its fruit both sweet and bitter, its shape like the oval eye of the Levant, the almond signals Jewishness throughout Celan's work. Here in this poem he speaks perhaps to his mother—"you stepped with steady feet toward yourself, / the hammers swung free in the belfry of your silence"—and sees her walking through the evening, embraced by "what's dead." The poem closes:

Render me bitter.
Number me among the almonds.

Perfectly cadenced and clear, these lines from April 1952: no matter how ruptured and obscure his verse became during the next eighteen years, Celan never lost this readiness to number himself among the Jewish dead.

IV

TO REENTER the European 1950's and, from there, contemplate what only in 1960 acquired the label of Holocaust, takes considerable consciousness-lowering (and also involves questioning the idea of "holocaust," a Greek term for the Israelites' burnt offering to God). Elie Wiesel's *Night* came out in late 1958, André Schwarz-Bart's *The Last of the Just* a year later: not until 1959 did West Germany seriously

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begin prosecuting war criminals; the Israelis arrested Eichmann in 1960. Nowadays the multitude of incommensurable events called the Holocaust, having received some genuine understanding, just as often suffers trivialization and abuse, an easy tag on the tongue. But during the 1950's—between the emptying of the DP camps, let us say, and the Eichmann trial—there was numbness, repression, denial, apathy, or expedient forgetfulness of the European Jewish catastrophe.

In this atmosphere Paul Celan's *Todesfuge*, the centerpiece of his 1952 volume *Mohn und Gedächtnis*, underwent a strange and estranging metamorphosis. One or two good reviews of the 1952 book turned up, but the dominant tone came from German critics who seem to have taken Celan's Parisian exile as a sign that his poetry would eschew reality, *à la* French symbolism or surrealism. One writer compares his lyrics to Chagall, but then calls them "glittering *arrangements*," as if he were talking not of Chagall but of Whistler. Another, "enchanted" by reading Celan, perceives in *Todesfuge* its "removal of everything concrete, its absorptive rhythm, its romanticizing metaphor." A critic in the influential German journal *Merkur* stresses Celan's "music," "fantasy," "playful freedom," likening him to Mallarmé and Valéry for his "self-stirred," "self-inspired poetic language, developed from purely verbal configurations." He applauds *Todesfuge* because the poet could "master" unimaginable horrors "with a few simple paradoxes"—and curiously enough the word for "master" is *bewältigen*, as in postwar Germany's desire for *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, "mastering" or "coming to terms with the past."

Reviews like these, and then the way some German writers befriended him as a kind of "protective Jew," led Celan to think that his "Deathfugue" was becoming an alibi—that guilty German admiration was making it into an artful, assimilable kind of reparations poem. Some remarks he published in 1958 tried to resist this tendency. He was speaking about German poetry, and indirectly about his own writing: "Remembering the most dismal things, and surrounded by what's most questionable," Celan says, this poetry "must locate its 'musicality' so as to have nothing more in common with that 'melodiousness' which more or less untroubled still trips tunefully alongside the most frightful things." Despite his misgivings, *Todesfuge* began coming into demand for anthologies and textbooks. A German friend has shown me her old high-school reader, and amid some penciled notes on the poem the word "Daktylus" stands out clearly. Now first of all observe this poem's strong dactylic meter, one can hear her teacher telling the class. No doubt Celan's lyric lent itself to appreciation of its artful composition, and in a society eager to get on with things, it is easy—or at least possible—to see how German pedagogy might have let the brutal scene in *Todesfuge* drop out of sight.

Meanwhile another view of *Todesfuge* was coming to the fore—among the intelligentsia, I would guess, rather than the general public. In 1951 and again in 1955, Theodor Adorno published an essay on "Cultural Criticism and Society," which included his now all-too-famous remark, "After Auschwitz, to write a poem is barbaric"—the point being that since Nazi barbarism destroyed the human image, anyone indulging in lyric harmony must also be barbaric. This remark gained notoriety, and when Hans Magnus Enzensberger disputed it, Adorno elaborated the idea in a 1962 radio talk, saying that aesthetic stylization could transfigure the horror of Auschwitz. By now he was generally taken to be referring to *Todesfuge*'s enchanting cadences, and German critics followed this lead. But the fact is that Adorno had not even heard of Celan when he first laid down this dictum. Indeed, by 1960 or so, he recognized in Celan's writing the very qualities he stipulated for authentic literature: the "tension" and "dislocation" by which art after Auschwitz criticizes its own existence. Yet for Celan, I believe, the damage had been done—that out of Germany should come the charge that he was battening on his parents' murder!

EARLY in 1958 Celan composed a kind of sequel to *Todesfuge* called *Engführung*, meaning "stretto" or a "straitening," a "narrow leading." *Engführung* wholly reconceives the matter and fugue-like manner of the earlier poem. In fact it goes far beyond black milk and a blue-eyed commandant, making memory itself a further dimension of the original trauma. Celan's terse and cryptic verbal motifs fold forward and back on themselves as in a stretto, the tight overlap of voices closing a fugue, so that finally all our universe is implicated in *l'univers concentrationnaire*, the landscape of deportation and death. By adopting a fugue form again but now making it complex and enigmatic, the author of *Todesfuge* was pushing against his own limits and his listeners' as well. "With art go into your very selfmost straits [*deine allereigenste Enge*]," Celan said in 1960, "and set yourself free."

Engführung ends with a precarious hope, recalling not only the SS shooting-walls but also the

> choirs, back then, the
> psalms. Ho, ho-
> sanna.
>
> So
> temples still stand. A
> star
> still does have light.
> Nothing,
> nothing is lost.
>
> Ho-
> sanna.

Hosanna, in Christianity a cry of praise, in the Hebrew Psalms originally meant "Save us now."

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Here, with possibly a hint of blasphemous sarcasm, praise and desperation are uttered at once, a broken cry as in the mouths of Jewish martyrs or in the mouth of a poet whose speech can have no wholeness any more. It's not surprising to learn that Adorno before he died had been planning an essay on *Engführung*: this poem may be Celan's greatest single achievement.

V

With *Engführung*, Celan entered upon five years dense with revealing events and a new sort of poetry, years I would gladly call *anni mirabiles* if they were not more truly *anni terribiles* in their psychic cost. His experience from 1958 to 1962 seems to me vitally worth recounting: it forms the heart of this brief biography.

On receiving the Bremen Prize in January 1958, Celan attempted for the first time since the war his apologia as a poet. Characteristically, he hedges his anxiety and anger with discreet irony, telling his German audience that the Bukovina he stems from "may be unfamiliar to most of you"; that as "a region in which human beings and books used to live," it is "now reduced to historylessness." This place, Celan says pointedly, "was home to a not inconsiderable part of those hasidic stories which Martin Buber has retold for us all in German"—as if the phrase "us all" could ever embrace Jews together with non-Jews in Germany, much less the survivor in exile. Celan in his 1958 Bremen address, prepared around the time of *Engführung*, calls language "this one thing [that] remained in the midst of the losses." But language—and he may mean not only German but language as such—had to "pass through its own answerlessnesses, pass through a frightful muting, pass through the thousand darknesses of deathbringing speech." Out of these straits Celan derives his hope for a poetry "in its essence dialogue," yet it seems a desperate dialogue, "a message in a bottle." Just how desperate this task felt, he shows in closing his talk with a capsule self-portrait of one who "goes to language with his very being, stricken by and seeking reality," *wirklichkeitswund und Wirklichkeit suchend*. This last phrase catches the poet's motive force but also a fatal logic pulling Celan round and back to what wounded him.

Drawn inescapably back toward "that which happened," Celan also sought a kind of safe-conduct by clinging to his East European—that is, non-German, prewar—identity. "I've become neither European nor Western," he writes from Paris (in Rumanian) to Petre Solomon in 1957. "Now and then I'm invited to give readings in Germany. Even the anti-Semites have found me out." At this time he began reading modern Russian poetry, which suddenly met a need for Celan. He reacted as a poet, by finding how his German language might house such spirits as Aleksandr Blok, Sergei Esenin, and Osip Mandelstam. During 1958 he published translations from their work, "now gladly and thankfully," he remarked, "finding my way back to this language" learned under Soviet occupation in "my Bukovina homeland." These three Russians had all welcomed the October Revolution, but ambivalently. Celan must have shared that ambivalance through them. What is more, Esenin had committed suicide, Mandelstam attempted it once and later perished in exile, Blok died "famous and lonely," as Celan wrote, and another poet he wanted to translate, Marina Tsvetaeva, also took her own life in 1941. Not only their Russianness drew Celan to them.

In Mandelstam, more than any other, Celan encountered "inalienable truth," he told the Russian scholar Gleb Struve: "Rarely have I had, as with his poetry, the sense of making my way alongside the Irrefutable and the True." And he once said, "I consider translating Mandelstam into German to be as important a task as my own verses." Why this sudden piercing affinity in 1958? At heart, he told Struve, because of how Mandelstam lived "in time, thought along with and out of this time, thought it through to the end in every moment, in its themes and events, in the words that faced theme and event and were to stand for them, at once openly and hermetically." Under this shock of recognition Celan is speaking doubly, for himself no less than Mandelstam. I think something similar accounts for his readiness to believe that the Russian poet did not die in Siberian exile in 1938 as was generally believed, but later "had to share the fate of so many other Jews in that part of Russia occupied by Hitler's armies." This fate, after all, was linked to that of Celan's parents.

Mandelstam became something of an alter ego, almost a blood brother, and in one of several poems alluding to him, Celan dramatically seals that bond: "A road to Russia rises into your heart," he says, speaking to himself,

> the name Osip comes toward you, you tell him
> what he already knows, he takes it, he takes it
> off you, with hands,
> you undo his arm from his shoulder, the right
> one, the left,
> you fasten your own in their place,

as in some rite of transference, akin to Celan's frequent gesture of joining himself to the Jewish dead: "Render me bitter. / Number me among the almonds," he had said in an earlier poem. Clearly "the name" Mandelstam itself—*Mandel* meaning "almond" in German, *stamm* suggesting origins—stood immediately for Jewishness in Celan's mind. And he dedicated the book that emerged from these years, *Die Niemandsrose* ("The No-One's-Rose," 1963), "To the memory of Osip Mandelstam."

Celan knew bone-deep what his poetry had to do with his Jewishness. And in seeing Mandelstam as Hitler's victim rather than Stalin's, he showed a bent of mind unusual for the late 50's. Nor did

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it take the Eichmann trial in 1961 to remind him what Nazism had done. As early as 1956 he translated from French into German Jean Cayrol's narration for the Alain Resnais film *Night and Fog*, which then circulated widely in West Germany. We can hear, if we care to, Celan's version of the film's closing words resonating in his own head: "Here are we who look at these ruins [of the camps] and sincerely believe that racial madness was buried in them forever . . . who watch things going on around us and do not hear that the scream never ceases."

CELAN did have periods of relative serenity, he had "a truly exceptional human being" as his wife, to whom "I owe very much," and a son Eric born in 1955. But the scream never ceased. He felt more vulnerable to the country he never inhabited, Germany, than to France where he lived almost incognito. He read West German papers, which in 1958 began reporting efforts to ferret out Nazi criminals from the government and elsewhere, Nazis fleeing to South America and the Arab countries, flagrant anti-Semitic slander, vandalism, and violence. On Christmas eve 1959, Cologne's reconsecrated synagogue was daubed with swastikas and slogans; then followed a wave of anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi outbursts.

It goes dumb, it goes deaf
behind my eyes.
I see poison blooming.
In every word and shape.

Celan's lines stem from 1960. At the same time he wrote bitterly to Margul-Sperber in Bucharest about "Hitlerism reborn," and ended his letter: "*Ach*, you know, I've often wondered if I'd have been better off remaining among the books of my homeland." Then soon afterward he received Germany's prestigious Büchner Prize. His acceptance speech, "The Meridian," brilliantly defines poetry as the act of setting oneself free by seeking a utopia—a region that "is not to be found," that "does not exist"—along a meridian that leads to "the place of my own origin . . . on a child's map."

Germany's neo-Nazism and recrudescent anti-Semitism might not have touched so raw a nerve in Celan if he weren't at the same time suffering a personal injury. Early in 1960, Yvan Goll's widow publicly accused him of plagiarizing her husband's work. Celan in 1949 had visited the Alsatian Jewish surrealist, dying in a Paris hospital, and translated his French poems—perhaps too freely for Claire Goll. Her groundless charge seems to have been animated by this and other obscure reasons. Newspapers picked it up, and though his Austrian and German friends defended Celan, the protracted campaign upset him terribly. It is "an attempt to destroy me and my poems," he tells his old mentor Sperber in July 1960, an attempt "clearly connected to the machinations of neo-Nazism in the Federal Republic." Two years later, still deeply embittered, he feels himself outcast, "a rootless Steppenwolf, and one with recognizably Jewish features." This letter to Sperber closes: "I beg you not to give my manuscripts to anyone from this so golden West."

By this time Celan was teaching German at the Ecole Normale Supérieure, which gave him some income and affiliation. But France never welcomed or recognized him; this leading postwar poet was never asked to give a reading there. Writing to Petre Solomon in Rumania in 1962, he explains why he and his wife have almost no friends in France: "Don't forget how deep the fascist cancer, clothed or not, has penetrated. I'm trying here again to write in Rumanian, as you see, I'm finding the words." Then a few lines later he says that despite "the German language, which is mine—and which painfully remains mine . . . I am, with my meridian, precisely there where I began"—namely, Bukovina—"(with my old Communist heart)," he adds.

To see Celan driven East in his mind by postwar anti-Semitism makes one wonder what he saw there for himself, with Czernowitz under Soviet domination and Bucharest hardly free of it. Maybe the revelations after Stalin's death had not taken hold, or, more likely, a desperate nostalgia kept the poet's youthful socialism and particular Russian affinities insulated from what he otherwise must have known very well. Writing in March 1962 to the Austrian Reinhard Federmann, he notes that "I have—witness Blok, Mandelstam, and Esenin—a Russian (read: Jewish) great-grandmother," a Karaite, he adds, "B'nei Mikra, Children of the Scripture." Celan ends the letter urging his friend to come visit: "We'll go ahead and make *shabbes*, never mind OASes and palms." He is far from the promised land, that last phrase suggests, but it also says that such things as the OAS, a French ultra-nationalist army in Algeria, will not hinder the Sabbath.

Writing to Federmann a week earlier, he uses Russian and Church Latin to sign himself *Russkij poët in partibus nemetskich infidelium*, "Russian poet among the German heathen," and then adds *'s ist nur ein Jud*, "it's just a Jew," which borrows from a jeering ditty in Kafka's "A Country Doctor": "Strip off his clothes, then he'll cure us, / and if he doesn't, then kill him dead! / It's just a doctor, just a doctor." These whimsically mordant signatures are also signals of distress and determination, sent from "this so golden West." Kafka, Mandelstam: in Celan's presiding spirits one sees brilliance fraught with tragedy, forerunning the fate of Central and East European Jewry.

Along with looking East, Celan found another way to trace the strain of his Jewishness during these years, in a unique piece of prose. Shortly after completing his Mandelstam translations, he went to the Swiss Alps in July 1959 and was to meet Theodor Adorno at Sils-Maria. But Celan had to return early to Paris and thus—"not accidentally," he once hinted—missed the meeting. In

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August, though, out of the missed encounter came his "Conversation in the Mountains," a dialogue between Jew Klein and Jew Gross that winds its way with soft humor and intensity through questions of language, perception, God, nature, and what these things mean to the garrulous Jewish outsider. At one point Jew Klein reminisces:

> On the stone is where I lay, back then, you know, the flagstones; and near me, that's where they were lying, the others, who were different from me and the same, the cousins; and they lay there and slept, sleeping and not sleeping, dreaming and not dreaming; and they did not love me and I did not love them. . . .

This reverie on a lost people continues through the same tentative unfolding rhythms and then closes:

> I here and I there, I, perhaps accompanied—now!—by the love of those not loved, I up here on the way to myself.

Celan once said this "Conversation in the Mountains" was "actually a *Mauscheln*" between him and Adorno—that is, a German-Jewish sort of jabber, a schmoose—and at times in the dialogue you can almost see a Yiddish shrug or gesture. But really "It was . . . myself I met" in the mountains, Celan later said. In his recording of this "conversation," to which I have listened over and over, his tones and emphases make palpable an obligation binding the speaker to his Jewishness and to the Jewish dead.

INEVITABLY that obligation, fed by the events and emotions of these years, found voice in Celan's poetry. "THERE WAS EARTH INSIDE THEM, and they dug," begins the first poem in *Die Niemandsrose*, and this digging goes on till the poem ends in a kind of desperate alliance:

> O you dig and I dig, and I dig through to you,
> and the ring on our finger awakens.

In another poem from 1960, "The Sluice," Celan's language itself enacts a similar struggle between loss and recovery:

> To
> poly-goddedness
> I lost a word that sought me:
> *Kaddish.*
>
> Through
> the sluice I had to go,
> to salvage the word back into
> and out of and across the salt flood:
> *Yizkor.*

Many poems in this book, written from 1960 to 1962, depend on an explicit Jewishness that Celan had earlier displayed only rarely. "Psalm," also from *Die Niemandsrose*, parodies Hebraic forms so as to summon and deny God in the same breath:

> No one kneads us again out of earth and clay,
> no one conjures our dust.
> No One.
>
> Blessed art thou, No One.
> In thy sight would
> we bloom.
> In thy
> spite.

A great deal depends on how we hear the word *Niemand*, "No One." Does no divine presence at all shape our lives any more, or does the missing, malevolent God of European Jewry intend some second Creation? Here Celan's contradictions embroil even his translator. The second stanza ends, *Dir / entgegen*, meaning either "toward thee" or "against thee." Partly for the rhyme with "sight," and even more for Celan's quarrel with a God his quarrel half-affirms, I have chosen to say that we bloom "In thy / spite."

In *Die Niemandsrose*, Celan sows his verse with more names of people and places, more Jewish terms and quotes, than in any other collection, as if trying to specify a tradition around his individual talent. One poem takes its epigraph from Heine's "To Edom!," a Jew's angry quarrel with Christendom, and another poses a Yiddish ghetto song against the Annunciation. In "Radix, Matrix" Celan seeks the womb of "that race, that murdered one":

> (Root.
> Root of Abraham. Root of Jesse. No One's
> root—oh
> ours.)

He will build a poem around Rabbi Loew of Prague, entitle another "*Havdalah*," and name the shofar blast—*Tekiah!*—in another. A 1962 lyric called "Tabernacle Window" seems to arise from the mood of Celan's letters then—uprooted, displaced, groping for orientation:

> The eye, dark:
> as tabernacle window. It gathers
> what was, what remains, a world: the wander-
> East, the
> hovering ones, the
> humans-and-Jews,
> the people-of-the-clouds.

Looking for what will center his world, the searching spirit in this poem has to hobble beneath

> the black hail that
> fell there too, in Vitebsk,
>
> and those who sowed it, they
> write it away.

Against postwar Germany's "writing away" of the Jewish catastrophe, this poem "goes to ghetto and Eden" and comes upon the Hebrew alphabet,

> paces off
> the letters and the mortal-
> immortal soul of the letters,
> goes to Aleph and Yod and goes farther,

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builds it, the Star of David, lets it
flame up, once,

lets it die down—there it stands,
invisible, stands
by Alpha and Aleph, by Yod,

by the others, by
all of them: in
you,

Beth,—that is
the house, where the table stands with

the light and the Light.

Against oblivion and neo-Nazi revisionism, this memory of Sabbath candles might yield nothing but nostalgia. Yet somehow Celan's touch upon the Hebrew "Beth," which means house and is also the first letter of Genesis, *Bereshit*, "In the beginning"—somehow Celan's tact and spareness preserve for the Sabbath its original, redemptive force.

All this is not to say that solely Jewish writing belongs to *Die Niemandsrose*. But such poems do mark the book off from Celan's work before and after, and they feel charged by the anxiety besetting his letters from 1960 to 1962. The book's next-to-last poem, following Celan's ritual exchange of limbs with Mandelstam, takes its epigraph from Marina Tsvetaeva: *Syuh paetty Zhidy*, usually translated "All poets are Jews." But since Tsvetaeva has just said, "In this most Christian of all worlds," and has then used ironically the popular czarist epithet *Zhidy*, her phrase really says, "All poets are Yids." If Celan could hear the accrued hostility behind a word such as "Yid," his German audience by and large might not, because for his own poem he prints the epigraph in Cyrillic. Maybe the fact that all poets are Yids felt too painful to declare outright.

With only one German poet of his time, Nelly Sachs, Celan shared his pain, and also took hers on himself. Her postwar poetry "stands alongside the truest books in my library," he writes her in 1957, and in 1959, though they still have not met, she addresses him "Paul Celan, dear Paul Celan, blessed by Bach and Hölderlin, blessed by the Hasidim." Sachs fled Berlin in the spring of 1940 for Sweden, and only after three years began writing poems again. Her imagery and Celan's have much in common—sand, ash, dust, stone, blood, rose, star—and both poets tap Jewish mystical sources, especially the Zohar and Gershom Scholem's studies of Kabbalah. When Sachs was awarded Germany's Droste prize in May 1960, she received it on German soil but rather than stay there overnight she chose a hotel in Zurich across the Bodensee. Celan with his family met her at the airport, and afterward he dedicated a poem to Nelly Sachs about their meeting:

The talk was of your god, I spoke
against him, I
let the heart that I had,
hope:
for
his highest, death-rattled, his
wrangling word.

As ever, Celan cannot split no from yes. His doubts undermine the redemptive sources that for Nelly Sachs could transform Jewish suffering. Yet this return to Germany after twenty years precipitated in her a long bout of terrifying persecution mania. Celan invited her from Zurich to Paris, and later that summer sent her humorously therapeutic letters encouraging her to write more poems. Before this crisis, Nelly Sachs had written Celan, "Between Paris and Stockholm runs the meridian of grief and consolation." In 1960 he even went to Stockholm to visit her in the hospital, but she did not want him to see her, lest it harm him in his turn.

Amid the wracking anxieties these poets shared, Celan and Sachs also shared one mystical experience that stayed with them for years. During their first meeting in late May 1960, something memorable had occurred to underline their conversation. As Celan's poem on that occasion puts it, he and Sachs were looking at Zurich's Minster, the great cathedral, reflected in the Limmat River:

On the day of an ascension, the
Minster stood over there, it came
with some gold across the water.

Just that glimpse of "some gold," mentioned in a brief subordinate phrase, must have given the two survivors a vision of their own to hold to, as against Jesus's ascension and the magnificent cathedral. Later that summer, to help comfort Sachs, Celan wrote recalling what had happened in Zurich and again in Paris: "Do you remember how, as we spoke of God a second time in my home—which is yours, awaiting you—how the golden gleam appeared on the wall?"

Years later Nelly Sachs herself, having received the Nobel Prize by then, reminded Celan of the light they had witnessed together. He thanked her, saying that "Once, in a poem, there even came to me, by way of the Hebrew, a name for it."

CLOSE, IN THE AORTA'S ARCH,
in bright blood:
the bright word.

Mother Rachel
weeps no more.
Carried across,
all of that weeping.

Still, in the coronary arteries,
unbinded,
Ziv, that light.

Mother Rachel bewailing her lost children, as Celan knew from Gershom Scholem's work on the kabbalists, also figures as the *Shekhinah*, God's presence among the exiles of Israel. Here she

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"weeps no more" and a "bright word" lightens the heart. *Ziv*, a rare term usually seen in the phrase *Ziv haShekhinah*, the glory of God's presence, "came to me by way of the Hebrew," Celan says, as if this apparition of the word came twinned with the light itself. Twenty-five years earlier the newly orphaned poet had written, "My tender mother weeps for all." Now, in a poem composed around the time of the Six-Day War, a single word rooted in Jewish mysticism binds up his mother's loss, Nelly Sachs's pain, and Israel's exile from Jerusalem—a Hebrew word Celan leaves virtually untranslated, preserving this poem a little from his German audience.

Clearly Gershom Scholem's work opened up a tradition of mystical and messianic thought that gave Celan rich resources, even at his most pessimistic. (When Celan told Adorno that their missed encounter in Switzerland had precipitated his prose piece, "Conversation in the Mountains," the philosopher "thought I should have stayed longer in Sils-Maria; then I'd have gotten to know the true 'Jew Gross,' Gershom Scholem," who was to visit there too. Celan and Scholem met later in Paris, then again in Jerusalem.) Celan also read gratefully Martin Buber's hasidic tales, and without *I and Thou* his lyrics would probably not have been so pervaded, so essentially oriented, by the intimate pronoun *du*, whether addressed to God or mother or beloved or a host of others or his listener or himself.

Yet I think something more drew him to Buber and especially to Scholem. These were Germans writing in German and mining their Jewishness, thus they made compelling examples of what Celan found so problematic. In fact Buber's readiness to be acclaimed in postwar Germany disturbed Celan, as against Scholem's fierce denials of the German-Jewish "symbiosis" in the early 60's. Before the war Celan had cherished a saying by the socialist Gustav Landauer: "My Germanness and Judaism do each other no harm and much good." Later, as he told Erich Kahler, that attitude seemed one of Landauer's "most tragic and childish mistakes."

VI

It was to Erich Kahler, another German-speaking Jew, that Celan opened his anxieties over neo-Nazism, anti-Semitism, and even "'Jewish' Kapos" in the German literary world. In 1962 he sent Kahler a copy of his first book, admiringly inscribed, with a sentence carefully copied out from Kahler's 1939 essay on the "Origin and Metamorphosis of Jew-Hatred." The sentence Celan chose deplores Western, assimilated Jews who repudiate their East European past and the "tender, intimate society" of Hasidism. When Kahler responded immediately and generously to the gift, an exchange began in which Celan vented his bitterness at the German people's postwar unregeneracy. Meanwhile Kahler in a 1964 essay (which I believe Celan saw), without in the least understating the ruthless brutality of German Nazism, could urge Jews as well as Germans "to probe honestly and soberly" their "special interpenetration of dispositions and destinies," so as "to purify their minds."

Celan could manage no such sobriety or purity. He begins a 1965 poem

> WITH THE PERSECUTED in late, un-
> silenced,
> radiant
> covenant,

telling us where, ineluctably, he had to go. Unlike Kahler, Scholem, and Buber, with whom otherwise he felt so much in common, Celan had lived through the war and then remained in Europe. This choice (or lack of choice) kept him bound to those who were eliminated by means of words such as *Einsatzgruppe, judenrein, Endlösung.*

How could Celan keep this covenant and yet do so by means of the German language? He put his verse under more and more exacting pressure: words crack in two or meld into neologisms, syntax and rhythm rupture, arcane, archaic terms crop up. Much of what he wrote during the mid- and late-60's came out nearly impenetrable. He had thought at times of giving up his craft and calling. "But you know what it means for a German-language author who has lived through the Nazi terror," he wrote to Petre Solomon in 1962, "to be cut off a second time from his language." Here again the example comes to mind of Scholem and Buber, who left Germany for Palestine before the war. That had not been an option for Paul Antschel, though an aunt did emigrate in 1933. After the war, I think Celan actually needed that sense of disseverance which comes from living in Diaspora. Anything else would have violated psychological truth for him, if not also historical truth.

In June 1967, however, along with the rest of world Jewry he felt a quickened awareness:

> Just think:
> the peat-bog soldier of Masada
> makes a home for himself.

Celan wrote this even before the Six-Day War had ended. Early in 1968 he received an invitation to Israel, and just before going there he composed a remarkable poem, *Du sei wie du*:

> YOU BE LIKE YOU, ever.
>
> *Ryse vp Ierosalem and*
> *rowse thyselfe*
>
> The very one who slashed the bond unto you,
>
> *and becum*
> *yllumyned*
>
> knotted it new, in memoraunce,
>
> spills of mire I swallowed, inside the tower,
>
> speech, dark-selvedge,
>
> *kumi*
> *ori.*

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Having cut himself off from Jerusalem, the speaker binds himself again—via Meister Eckhart's medieval version of Isaiah—and then, after mute exile, utters Isaiah's Hebrew words themselves: *kumi ori*, "Arise, shine." It is one of the purest imperatives in Celan's writing, and all the purer for occurring in a language that precious few of his German audience would recognize.

FINALLY, in October 1969, he went to Israel. Encountering relatives and friends, survivors from his youth in prewar Czernowitz, and encountering them there in the state of Israel along with Hebrew poets whose mother tongue was German, such as Yehuda Amichai and Dan Pagis—all this had its impact on Celan. He walked the walls and gates of Jerusalem's Old City, visited Yad Vashem, and read to appreciative audiences, including the poem "Just think." He also gave the Hebrew Writers Association a brief talk, in which his gratefulness for the reborn nation and its revived tongue seems thwarted somewhat by his difficult access to that new life. His key sentence says:

> I think I have a notion of what Jewish loneliness can be, and I sense as well . . . a thankful pride in every homegrown green thing that stands ready to refresh anyone who comes by; just as I take joy in every newly won, self-feelingful, fulfilled word that rushes up to strengthen those who turn toward it.

On returning to Paris, after about two weeks, he wrote one of his hosts: "I'm happy now to have been in Israel . . . to have lived so intensively, more intensively than for a long time. . . . I'm already thinking of returning." But he never did return.

What Celan did do, once back in Paris, was to begin a series of lyrics that involve Jerusalem's landscape in his own deeply divided response to being there. Absalom's Tomb, Gate of Mercy, Lion's Gate, Gethsemane—in his verse they move from collective into personal focus. And realizing these places for himself means naming them: "Say that Jerusalem *exists*." The city had granted him moments of radiant serenity, but moments mined with uneasiness:

> THAT SHINING, yes, the one that
> Abu Tor
> saw riding toward us as we
> orphaned into one another, with life,
> not from the wrists up only—:
> a goldbuoy, out of
> temple depths,
> marked the danger that lay
> quiet under us.

Celan's Jerusalem came riven by contradiction. He felt at home, or desperately at home, stirred by the sight of "so many Jews, only Jews, and not in a ghetto," as he later remarked to a friend; but also he felt estranged, unsure whether he might fit in among this people speaking their own language in their own land. Here is a poem from Celan's brief stay in Israel that makes and unmakes its messianic hope with every breath:

> NOTHINGNESS, for the
> sake of our names
> —they gather us in—,
> sets its seal,
>
> the end believes us
> the beginning,
>
> in front of
> masters going
> mute around us,
> all things unsundered, in witness
> comes a clammy
> brightness.

Some of this remains obscure to me, but I am sure that the middle couplet describes a meridian-like expectation, and that the poet took pains to end, after his last bleak line break, on "brightness."

WHAT did it mean for Paul Celan to end his own life? He had written: "the light and the Light," "*Ziv*, that light," "*kumi ori*," "that shining," "a clammy brightness." Possibly suicide offered a last true way of joining "With the persecuted in late, un- / silenced, / radiant / covenant." Possibly this poet, his mother tongue broken into the murderers' tongue, at last found radiance but at the cost of silence, found brightness by going mute.

Possibly. But this much is sure: when Paul Celan drowned in the Seine around Passover 1970, he was done with his pain. "No one / bears witness for the / witness," he said at his bleakest. Has anyone the right to claim brightness and radiance for Celan? We do it more likely for our own sake, wanting to see beyond the extinction of this extraordinary man and of his voice.

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When the Pipes Froze

A Story

Linda Collins

On Friday, January 2nd, we went up to Ashford for a winter weekend, or so we thought, with new cross-country skis and long underwear, leaving the children at home to write term papers and stay out late with their friends. By the time we turned off the highway, the sun had set. It was bitterly cold. When we arrived at the house, my husband, with a suitcase in one hand and the key in the other, went at once to open the door, saying he would turn up the heat and come back for whatever I couldn't manage. I followed with my arms full, but when I entered the shed I found him hunched over the padlock at the side door of the house, with his gloves thrown down on the floor, in the fading light. "Christ," he said, not looking up, "the power is off."

"The bulb," I said, "couldn't it just be the bulb?" Setting down my bags, I felt overhead for the string to the shed light.

"I tried it," said Richard. "I think we're in trouble."

I watched him struggling with bare hands over the stiff lock. I knew he was fearing for the pipes, new pipes, all of them, which we had installed, along with the new heating system, the new wiring, the new kitchen equipment, when we redid the house as soon as we bought it two years ago. The warmth I had brought with me from the car was escaping and I stamped my feet on the uneven shed floor.

"Don't do that," said Richard. "You're making everything shake."

At last he pushed open the door. In the dark winter light the house was cold and quiet. The furnace, the pump, and the refrigerator all were silent. We walked from room to room without speaking to find the damage. There was no sound but our own footsteps. At first there was nothing to see. The house was neat and simple and didn't look as though anything had happened to it at all. While Richard took a flashlight down to the cellar, I opened the bathroom door. Forgetting the temperature, I expected to see water leaking from the walls and spreading on the floor. There was nothing on the floor, but upon looking closely I noticed a fine crack in the toilet tank, which held, as I saw when I lifted the lid, a neat rectangle of ice. Carefully I put back the lid and wondered what Richard was finding below. I shuddered with cold and clapped my hands in their mittens.

In the kitchen, on the table near the window, a brown bowl we had been given as a housewarming present was filled with ice. I must have thrown the chrysanthemums away when we were cleaning up the last time we were here but left the water, which had frozen, and in freezing had cracked the bowl, letting a little water seep through the crack and spread on the table where, in its turn, it froze.

Richard called me to come down to the cellar.

"It's bad," he said, aiming the flashlight so I could see the pump. The pump head was split. He showed me the line of the break along the side and straight across the top. We were both shaking with cold. As we leaned over the pump, the beam of light lit our smoking breaths. Richard pointed the flashlight at the holding tank and I saw it was frozen solid. It was all bad, very bad. He was certain pipes were broken all over the house.

Upstairs I showed him a bottle of tonic I had found in the kitchen cupboard, with its sides splintered and a plug of frozen tonic coming out of its neck.

"Put it down," he said. "You'll cut yourself. That's all we need." He waved it away and sat down at the kitchen table with his head in his hands. "I knew I should have come up to drain the pipes," he said. Last winter, the men who repaired the house advised us to keep the furnace on; it would be better for the new wood, they said, and for the plaster as well. They would keep an eye on the house for us, they said. This year autumn weather had lasted until just before Christmas. We had trusted the furnace and the thermostat to keep going until we got here.

Suddenly Richard picked up the broken bowl in both hands, raised it above his head, and hurled it at the wall. Pieces of pottery skidded on the

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Linda Collins, a new contributor, is a writer who lives in New York. The present story will appear in a collection which Viking is bringing out later this year.

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floor. The chunk of ice rolled as far as the fireplace and stopped. "Sorry," he said, as he got up to get the broom. "I just had to." Then we both laughed a little and I patted him on the arm. I wished we could just drive away and leave it all behind.

Richard called the power company, the neighbors, the electrician, and the plumber. The plumber's wife said he was out working on pipes. We should keep on trying to call him, she said. The neighbors were sympathetic, they knew what trouble we were in. They had not lost power but they'd seen our night light off and worried about that. The power company's phone was busy.

It was too cold to stay in the house any longer. Holding the flashlight in one hand, I dialed Howard Johnson's and reserved a room for the night. "But let's not eat there," I said. Richard agreed we didn't have to eat there. We would eat at Herm's, instead. As we drove down the winding road with moonlit fields and black barns on either side, I felt a guilty relief. We could do nothing about what had happened now. It was something for the electrician, for the power company, for Mr. Daisy, the plumber.

Herm's was warm and brightly lit. The tablecloths were red and the napkins were green. We ordered whiskey sours and I stood up at once to go to the salad bar. I put cherry tomatoes on my plate, corn relish, three-bean salad, pickled beets, pimentos, and shredded carrot salad. I drank my whisky sour, and when we had finished our drinks we ordered two more. For dinner we had scrod with Newburg sauce and for dessert I had pumpkin pie. While we ate we talked about the children, about Richard's department and some promotions due to be considered soon. We said nothing about the pipes, but as we left the restaurant and the bitter air struck my cheeks, I said, "That all was delicious."

The wind was blowing little swirls of snow around the parking lot. The moon had set, and the sky was black, clear, and full of stars. Richard started the car.

"Everything we ate was orange," he said. It had all come back to him. He was struck with the enormity of it: not the cost, which would of course be great, not the trouble, the inconvenience, the ruin of our weekend, but something more deeply distressing, something that evoked shame in him, and misery. I saw he felt that the cold, knowing he was not a worthy person, had wrapped itself around his house and had taken its rightful toll in cracked, twisted, and burst materials. He could hardly talk for the weight of it.

THE HOUSE had looked innocent as we drove into the yard, and unharmed. It gave no sign that anything had happened. A light snow lay on the ground, old snow, thinly glazed with ice. Black, hollow stalks of sweet cicely and the brittle stems of the rosebushes, pushed back and forth by the wind, scratched against the siding. The house, with its shingle roof, front door, four windows, everything plain and symmetrical, looked quite as usual. But the cold had pressed against it. At first, the cold had merely run around the outside, testing for an opening here, a loose pane there, seeking entrance through the ways we go in and out, like a child, or a dog trying to slip in between his master's legs. Later, it sought cracks, like a mouse, or a bug. Finally, as the temperature fell to below freezing, and continued to fall, the cold, on which particular day we did not know, Christmas Day, perhaps, or the day after, had hugged the house to it. For by then, the cold had sunk through the air into the earth, reaching under the house with icy fingers which met in the hard subsoil beneath, and moved up to grip the house from below. When had the power gone off? When had the water in the bowl begun to freeze? The kitchen clock was stopped at eleven twenty-five. At eleven twenty-five one night, the power had gone off and with it the oil burner, and gradually the house had lost its heat and the pipes had frozen.

That this had happened in our absence, invisibly, made me think about the mystery of the great powers which exact events without our participation: the rising sun, the moon dragging behind her the tides, winter creeping down from the north, the seas spilling over the land, beaches emerging, waves of weather streaming overhead. I thought of the first days of the child in the womb and the tumor beginning to creep beyond its confines. While we were celebrating Christmas Eve or eating Christmas dinner, our house, white in the dark night, catching whatever light there was, starlight or cloudy moonlight, began to freeze and, helpless, suffered injuries whose extent we could not yet determine. Whatever was to break was broken and lay cracked and split. The damage was hidden, but when the heat came on again and the ice melted, water would seep from the pipes into the plaster walls. I entertained the hope that despite the laws of physics and country lore perhaps in our case some dispensation would have been made and either these pressures would not have been exerted or some other avenue would have been made to spare our plumbing. I did not express this thought to my husband, knowing it for a wanton thought, unworthy even as a hope, betraying me for a child.

To enter our wing of the motel, we had to open a glass door which bore a sign reading: "Your room key opens this door." Inside, we inhaled the hot, circulated air of the hall. Richard opened the door of our room, and I felt for the light switch, which responded to my finger, but in an unsatisfying way. The lights went on, but the switch made no click; it merely retreated slightly into its holder. Quickly, I observed the two double beds, the beige bedspreads, the carpet, mirrors,

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lamps, the soundproofing panel in the ceiling, the closed door to the bathroom, the television.

"What a nice room," I said.

Richard had gone straight to the telephone and was dialing the plumber.

In the house there had been a cold, dry smell, sad, vulnerable, and enduring. It was the smell of life withdrawn, life retreating into itself, not absent, but dormant and cold, the smell of cold wood. The motel room smelled invulnerable. Whatever substances had been used in the construction of its surfaces gave off a smell which was hard to breathe. Had it not been so cold out, I would have pushed open the plaid curtains with the plastic lining and opened a window. Even though we had just eaten, I picked up the menu for the restaurant. I turned on the television. I wanted to enjoy the motel, use all the plastic glasses, shine my shoes with the cloth that was just for shining shoes, bathe in the bathtub whose subsequent cleanliness was no concern of mine, dry myself under the orange rays of the ultraviolet fixture in the ceiling. Tomorrow, I thought, I will pocket the unopened little bars of soap.

"The power company says they'll try to get someone there on Monday," Richard said. "The girl said they have more to do than they can handle." He looked better now that he was working on the problem, getting people on the phone, starting on the solution. I wished we could just drive away in the morning and let the pipes freeze, the cellar flood, the branches fall where they would. How could we hold winter at bay?

Once, twenty-five years ago, on the beach at Race Point, near Provincetown, we had set up a pup tent and settled in for the night. We had spread out a plastic bag whose original purpose was to shield the wearer from a gas attack, or so the man in the army-navy store had said, but for us, advised by the helpful salesman, it was a way of protecting our sleeping bag from the damp chill of the sand at night. The tent, being absolutely primitive, had no floor. It was easy to set up, but nonetheless it took us a long time. Holding a tent pole in both hands, I twisted it slowly into the sand, bearing down with all my weight. Richard got his done first and came around to help me. Then we bent down to insert at a neat angle into the sand the metal prongs, unpleasantly scabbed with rust, around which we wrapped the stiff waxy loops of the tent canvas. Although the sun had set, it was still light; evening, but not yet night. The sky was clear, a green sky over a pale ocean. The tent faced the ocean and the east, where darkness would rise; behind us, over the dune, the pinks and yellows of the fading sunset flooded the sky. We had left our car, a Model A we had bought from a man in Brooklyn, at the parking lot and had struggled down to the beach with our equipment for the night. I imagine we had eaten supper. I don't remember carrying food, I don't remember eating, although we had probably brought along chocolate bars, or peaches, just for the fun of eating something in the tent. When everything was ready and our sleeping bag smoothed over the plastic bag, the door flaps fastened and a square of mosquito netting swagged over the door, we knelt on the sand and crawled in to consecrate our little house.

Night fell. The sand cooled. I lay on my stomach with my chin resting on the back of my hand. With the other hand I was gently lifting sand that was still warm from the heat of the day and letting it trickle through my fingers. Richard lay next to me and we looked out the door of the tent toward the ocean. For a long time we lay with our heads near the opening, talking, with the cool damp night air on our checks, hearing the rush and fall of the waves, feeling that our lives lay coiled within us, invisible, but unique and worthy of our expectations. What were we talking about for so long? We used to talk in those days about the future and the things we wanted to do, where we would travel, how we wanted to live. We also talked about the past, about our parents and our childhoods. We took a great interest in each other's childhoods, which were, in truth, not that long ago ended. We told one another the litany of familial injustices and those wrongs done to us by teachers and other grown-ups. We could talk for hours, for the whole night, and sometimes did, analyzing our short pasts or projecting our long future. We both had psychoanalyses and talked about them to one another, narrating our dreams when we woke up and at night reporting what our analysts had said. We had great expectations. At some time in the future, we would be "cured." Our proper lives would then commence. At that time I would write and have children and we would have exquisite, astonishing sex.

As we murmured and drowsed in our tent, far out at sea we could see heat lightning pulsing on the horizon. It was too far away to hear any thunder. The cold air on our cheeks made the heat of the tent delicious. We slept. When I awoke, it was still dark. The lightning was a lot closer, and I could hear long, slow rumbles of thunder. A bolt of lightning lit the ocean and I saw the waves breaking on the beach. All at once a wind replaced the breeze and the tent flapped heavily like a sail. My thought that we would soon enjoy the sound of rain overhead was swept away as I realized the storm was upon us. Fat drops spattered the canvas which shook in the noisy wind. Bolts of lightning followed one upon the other and thunder banged without a pause. As each bolt struck the sand, the beach flared into sight and the air was filled with the smell of hot metal. We crawled out of the tent which was slapping and twisting in the wind.

"Get away from it," Richard shouted. "It will draw the lightning. Run!"

I ran, but as I ran my feet sank into the sand. My legs dragged, and I could not pull my feet out

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of the soft sand. The rain hit my face in drops so large they hurt. Almost at once my long hair was soaked and my blue jeans and shirt were wet and heavy. I fell, got up, and stumbled again, running unevenly, squinting to see through the rain. Suddenly, I was struck with fear lest the flashlight I was holding attract lightning. Without stopping, I threw it as far away as I could. Panicky, I saw myself as a tiny creature running from the lightning as it tried to reach around me from above and strike me through the ring on my finger or the metal bits at the corners of my pants pockets. Nor did I know where Richard was in all that noise and darkness until a bolt which turned the whole beach pink and left a smell of burned matches showed him stopped ahead, looking back for me and urging me on.

"Come on!" he was shouting. "Come on! Run!"

And on I ran.

The next flash of lightning showed the break in the dunes where a white path led to the place we had left the car. As I staggered over the crest, the sharp beach grass stung my wet face. Crouching in the trough between the dunes, we ran on, knowing we were almost safe.

In the car, we gasped for breath, we kissed one another's wet faces, we put our wet arms around one another. We were panting and laughing. Our hearts were still thumping in our chests. Water ran from our hair and clothing down the channels of the upholstery and made puddles on the floor. Secure from the lightning by virtue of the thin hard rubber tires, which, as Richard explained to me, should the car be struck, would let the lightning go straight down to the ground, we laughed out loud. We were all right. It was an adventure, that was all. When we had caught our breath, we reviewed the whole story, how we had been lying with that light flickering far away, and suddenly we were in the middle of the storm, in danger, and the lightning was everywhere, we could hardly run. Bang, bang, it was all around us. There wasn't even a second between the thunder and the lightning, it was that close. The safety of the car was as delightful as the warmth and coziness of the tent had been earlier, but soon enough our excitement waned. Richard started the car and drove slowly through the rain, which flooded the windshield so that the wipers were scarcely able to sweep a fan-shaped clearing before the water ran around them and spilled over again.

We drove into Provincetown and banged on our friend Mary Stebbins's door to tell her about the lightning and the wind. She let us in, but she was half asleep. She had some dry crullers and we ate them and drank some milk to wash them down. I don't remember where we lay down to sleep, but it may have been on her floor.

MY FRIENDS and I firmly believed in love, and we believed in work. We believed that love and work were shields against failure. By failure, we meant the gradual replacement of vitality with the dismal acquisition of things, money, position, or reputation. It seemed that the adults we knew, our parents and our teachers, had all failed in life. Some had simply pursued false goals from the first; others had been deflected from their youthful ideals by one contingency or another. We detected the signs of this failure in the way they dressed and where they lived, in the cars they drove and the garages they parked them in, in the rugs they put on their floors and the pictures on their walls. We saw it as well in the lectures they gave and in the books they wrote. Richard's friend Stavros showed him a monograph he had found in the stacks written by Walter Stearns, one of their professors, forty years before. It had been his doctoral dissertation. "Do you see," Stavros said, raising his eyebrows and shaking his head, "do you see how *clean* it is? And look what happened to him." Such a thing would never happen to us. How not? One way was by our psychoanalyses.

It was not Richard and I alone who went to psychoanalysts. Most of our friends had psychoanalyses, as well. Barbara went to Dr. Thaler on 96th Street and Marilyn went to Dr. Riskin and later to Dr. Bauer, whom she referred to as Inge Riskin and Grete Bauer. Her father was a psychoanalyst and thought she should see a woman. Richard went to Dr. Freeman on Park Avenue and I went to Dr. Henschel on 92nd Street. Richard's sister, Anne, while she was living in New York, waiting for her husband to come back from Korea, went to Dr. Moskowitz, and Sandra, his younger sister, went to Dr. Reuben. Richard's friend Frank went to the clinic at Bellevue, and Michael went to the Psychiatric Institute at Columbia, which we called "PI." I went to Dr. Henschel three times a week and paid her fifteen dollars a session at first, then, later, twenty dollars. Richard went to Dr. Freeman three times a week also, but he had to pay only ten dollars a week at first until it was raised to twelve-fifty. Aaron and his girlfriend, Lisa, had been interviewed at the New York Psychoanalytic Institute in hopes of being accepted at its clinic where the fee was a dollar a session, but they both were rejected. We reported to one another how our analysts conducted our sessions: who let you smoke, what happened if you didn't come, did you have to pay even if you cancelled, who lay on the couch and who did not. Richard told the story of how Dr. Freeman once fell asleep and I used to tell about how I didn't say anything for a whole session and Dr. Henschel said nothing either, just went right on knitting. "Knitting?" said my listeners. "She knits? Oh, I couldn't stand that." Dr. Tartak told Susan Gould she should not see a certain boy she was going out with, and a friend of Richard's friend Marvin had been instructed to "refrain from sexual intercourse." Whether that proscription was intended to apply to a short period or to the

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course of treatment we did not know. Courses of treatment were long. I went to Dr. Henschel from the time I was nineteen until Richard got his Ph.D. and we went to Dijon on a Fulbright for a year. Richard went to Dr. Freeman for nearly as long.

ANOTHER way by which we planned never to fail was going to be our "work." We used the word "work" in a special way. "No, we are working," we might say to a friend who telephoned to ask if we wanted to go to the movies. Work to us meant studying philosophy or writing stories. But in fact I hardly wrote anything. From time to time I took out a notebook and made an entry. I described Schrafft's where Richard worked behind the counter at night. "The woman stirred her coffee without looking down. Her hair was greasy and her fingernails afflicted with dark red polish. Behind the candy counter across the aisle a young girl scooped glowing balls of candy from the bin with a brass scoop into paper bags. She . . . etc., etc." At other times I tried in this same notebook to begin a short story: "Everywhere he went in the city he heard the clicking of typewriters. He woke sometimes at night from dreams of terrible violence. Lying trembling in bed, he . . . etc." But it all came to nothing. I told myself that if I wrote faithfully in my notebook, not fiction, simply descriptions, in some mysterious way my inability to write something sustained and truthful would be short-circuited. In the pages about the young man who heard typewriters clicking everywhere, I wrote: "He tells himself that if he lies still long enough, his lassitude will be accomplished," but what I meant was if he stopped struggling he would be able to write just like all the unseen writers all over the city who were responsible for the clicking that was driving him mad with chagrin.

Nevertheless, despite the fact I had nothing to write about but not writing, I put great stock, in conversation at least, in the notion of work, and my friends and I talked a good deal about our "work." "Are you working?" we asked one another. "I am trying to get to work," we said. "I am having trouble working," we said. Talking like this seemed a part of working, it was the next best thing.

We thought work should have no goal other than the doing of the thing itself. You should go to your work daily, to your desk, or your table, and put in your hours. To think about a product, a finished piece of work, was a sign of banality. Anything that developed from your hours of work, a story, an article, was incidental. To be concerned with results was the mark of an ordinary person, someone with his eyes on worldly things. We adopted Stavros's and Elena's expression, "shoemakers and priests." We were priests, all four of us; Elena and I, writers, Richard and Stavros, philosophers. Shoemakers were supposed artists, supposed philosophers, who performed their sacred task as though it was an ordinary activity. Like a shoemaker who clasps a pump against his apron as he pries shank from heel, these do their work without raising their eyes to the horizon. We knew many such; we loved to classify the other graduate students, other writers, painters, and teachers, into priests and shoemakers.

There were other things that made me feel priestlike: staying up very late, preferably all night, talking; smoking a lot, and using a wooden bowl as big as a soupbowl for an ashtray, like Elena; writing telephone numbers on the wall over the phone like Stavros; like Elena, slicing scallions on the bias. We wanted to eliminate the trivial, the mild, from our lives. Elena told me Americans were trivial, were always cheerful, always smiling. I tried not to smile. I wanted to Europeanize myself.

Stavros and Elena both had serious raincoats. Elena wore hers all the time. Except for her raincoat, her clothes were all black. Once, she and I, walking somewhere south of Houston Street, turned a corner and walked straight into a little knot of teen-aged boys, who called out, "Hey, lady, how's the spy business?" I knew they were making fun of her raincoat. She had dark brown hair knotted low at the back of her neck and a pale, oval face. Her hands were stubby and her fingers stained with tobacco. She taught me to say, in Greek, "The child plays on the seashore." She drank scotch, neat. She loved cheese danish. She sang Turkish songs.

Elena wrote a story which opened: "The priest wore a skirt, but Iphigenia could see, if she lay on her stomach, that under the skirt he wore trousers." She read the story out loud to us, pronouncing "skirt" "skeert," and "stomach" "stow-mach." I was moved to envy. She wrote another story, called "The Masked Ball," somewhat in the style of Fielding, with long sentences not quite perfect in syntax, heavy with irony and sagging with Homeric similes. In the story, after having expended much thought and anxiety over his costume, the hero, upon arriving at the loft where the party was in progress, slips and falls backward down the stairs, injuring himself sufficiently badly as to make it impossible for him to attend the party. It made me ashamed of my own efforts. I tried to develop an armored style and to choose a subject which was objectively interesting. Like all writers, I wanted to write something serious and funny, something complex and at the same time simple, something that would win the admiration of my friends and set my anxiety about myself to rest. But it was too difficult. I went back to my notebook, describing the weather, referring obliquely to events in my psychoanalysis, and remarking to myself that writing was getting easier all the time.

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As we labored to show that we were priestlike in our work, so also about sex we wanted to have a priestly attitude. Together with Elena and Stavros we talked about having what we called an orgy. Our plans, however, had more of a doctrinal than an erotic cast. We wished, I believe, to mount some sexual performance that would confer upon us all the imprimatur of the chosen. We spoke about casting off from the shores of ordinary morality and setting out without the restraints we had been brought up within, restraints necessary, no doubt, for those who did not seek to widen their understanding, but confining for the artist or the explorer. We discussed at length setting, nuance, accoutrements. At last we decided we were ready to stage the thing itself. I remember, but not too well, my husband and myself attempting to have sexual intercourse on the floor of our apartment on East 17th Street, in the half-dark, with Elena and Stavros similarly occupied a short distance away. We believed ourselves to be shattering an awesome taboo and that in so doing a great liberty would be available to us. Perhaps all my difficulties in writing stories would be swept away. The following morning, in the subway on my way to Harper & Brothers, where I was a secretary in the children's book department, I looked around at the car full of men and women going to work, and I felt set apart.

WHEN we were taken to see our summer house for the first time, the house that was going to be ours, that is, it was a still, humid August afternoon. It was a good house, the agent told us, an 18th-century house, but it needed a little work. It had just come on the market, we were the first to see it. The agent was a big man, wearing a short-sleeved shirt. His tan gabardine jacket was folded over the front seat between him and Richard. As he drove smoothly through the exhausted countryside, he explained that the children of the owners had decided the house must be sold, but since they knew their father would be bound to object, a small deception would have to be practiced. We were to be looking at the house as prospective renters, he told us, and merely as possible prospective renters at that, should the old man decide to spend the winter in Florida for his health. That was the story to get us in to see the house. The children would find a way to deal with his objections if and when we showed an interest. We were to have no lines to say in this drama, we had only to stand by while the agent spun off his part.

The paved road became a dirt road, climbed a short way through hemlock woods, emerged and ran between untended fields yellow with goldenrod. We passed a maple tree with one red branch. Beside the road the sumac was already streaked with lavender. A pickup truck approached us, raising a cloud of dust. The agent pulled to the side of the road and we quickly closed the car windows. We opened them at once; the heat in the closed car was stifling.

"Alrighty," said the agent, turning into a short drive, and stopped. We got out, blinking in the sun. The agent waited, running his handkerchief over his forehead, while we looked at the outside of the house, the sagging roof, the peeling paint, the overgrown garden. A single hollyhock, tall as a grown person, unstaked, with flowers the color of plums and leaves eaten to lace by Japanese beetles, swayed in the hot breeze.

"Oh, she had quite a garden," said the agent. "Quite a garden. She's English. You could bring it back. It's not too far gone."

He stood on the front step and knocked on the door. Turning to us standing below on the grass, he said, "She can't hear. Won't wear a hearing aid, but can't hear." He banged the door with his fist, then pushed it open. "Hello-o-o? Mrs. Bailey? Hello-o-o." He put his head in the door. "They have the TV on, besides. Come on."

INSIDE, the house was dark. Green shades in all the windows were drawn against the sun except in the lower half of one where a square fan stirred a warm flow of air. A smell, sharp and sweet both, struck me and I had to swallow once and then again. It was medicine I smelled, medicine and talcum powder, and perhaps urine, as well. The old man was sitting in his pajamas, in a woolen plaid bathrobe, pink-skinned, with fine silvery hair, asleep. There was a bed in the room, brought from somewhere else, I thought, because it took up more than half of the space. The other furniture was crowded together at the far end of the room. Mrs. Bailey, who had been looking at television, smoking, turned her head as we entered and looked at us with no expression at all for a minute. Then she composed her features, pursed her lips, and smiled. Putting her hands on the arms of the chair she tried to stand up quickly but dropped her cigarette and reached down for it.

The agent stepped forward while we stood decorously in the doorway.

"Mrs. Bailey," he said, "good to see you. Not too hot for you?"

"Oh, Tom," she said, "yes, indeed. But the fan makes a glorious breeze, don't you think?" She was deeply lined, thin, heavily rouged, with black circles under her eyes. Seeing us, she cocked her head to one side and looked up at him with an artificial, questioning expression.

"These are the people who are interested in taking a look at the house." He introduced us and I shook her cold hand. Cigarette ashes fell down the front of her dress. She looked down and impatiently brushed them away. "Well, come on," she said, "have a look." She was attempting with trembling hands to light another cigarette. Tom, the agent, bent over her with his hand cupped around his lighter while she inhaled greedily.

I glanced at the old man who was moving in his

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armchair, waking up. He turned his head from side to side, smacking his lips, muttering.

"How are you, Mr. Bailey?" shouted the agent. "We came to see you."

"I'm eighty-four years old," he said to us. "Imagine that. I never thought. Hello, Tommy," he said, recognizing the agent. "Come to see the house?" He didn't look suspicious in the least, I thought. On the contrary, he smiled sweetly, then sighed and held his hands out in front of him, fingers extended, looked at them, and put them down in his lap. He looked straight at me. His eyes were light blue. "Go on," he said to the agent. "Go on, show them around."

But as we stepped into the hall on our way to the kitchen, he called us back. "It's called 'Green Fields.' Did you know that, Tommy? That's what I named it way back when. All right, go on."

"That's nice," said the agent. "'Green Fields.' No, I didn't know that. Very nice."

In the kitchen Mrs. Bailey lifted a lid from the coal stove and threw in her cigarette.

"Let me show you," she said, and unfolded a sheet of glossy paper which she spread out on the table. "It's the plans for the condo." She explained that she and her daughter, not Mr. Bailey's daughter, but the one that was hers and not his, were going to live together in New Jersey. "That's my daughter I had when I was married in England," she said. "Do you see that?" she asked pointing to a framed photograph of a stone house surrounded with roses. "That's my garden. I had everything growing there. Absolutely everything. People came from everywhere to see it." She shook her head. "He really has to go," she said. "I cannot manage another winter here with him. There were days in a row when no one could get up or down the road." She turned to me and said, "It was under ten for two weeks. Under ten below, I mean to say. I can't manage it again. It's impossible for someone used to the climate in Devon." She smiled at us and waved her hands in a way I understood was intended to evoke for us the gentle air of the south of England. The agent, in an effort to soften her indictment of the harshness of the winters, began to say something about cross-country skiing in a casual voice. Mrs. Bailey coughed, a long cough. She stood there, coughing, with one hand against the wall. At length, she caught her breath and tottered around with us from room to room, leaving little ridges and droppings of ash in her wake. She knew all about the behind-the-scenes plan, it seemed; clearly, she had been present at the councils.

In the bedroom, Richard and I exchanged a look which meant that despite the condition of the house we wanted it. The price was low, we should make an offer, we should buy it. We would sweep out the traces of the Baileys and everyone who had fumbled there before us. We would tear down the false moldings and plywood partitions, rip up the worn floorboards, burn the carpets with their scorches and stains. Our house would be fresh and cool in the summer. In winter, firelight would shine on the waxed floor.

THEN, by early October, the Baileys were gone. He was taken to a nursing home in Connecticut, near the daughter that was his, and she, ill, to the hospital in Springfield. The house was ours, empty, smelling of autumn mold and human effluvia. We opened all the doors and windows and walked from room to room considering what best to do. Then we turned our attention to setting in motion the plans we had decided upon in the matter of repairs and restoration, of choosing workmen, building a center chimney, installing twelve-over-twelve windows, putting down new pine floors, replacing the asphalt roof with cedar shingles, and buying the new kitchen appliances, the new tiles and faucets for the bathroom, and the new gleaming pink copper pipes to replace the plumbing in the whole house.

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Four Cheers for Capitalism

Tod Lindberg

It is four years now since the publication of George Gilder's *Wealth and Poverty*, a book generally considered to be the most important and lucid explication of supply-side economics. In 1981, as the Reagan White House and a more conservative Congress collaborated on a supply-side tax cut, and on reductions (or, at least, smaller increases) in government spending for the poor, *Wealth and Poverty* became a fixture on national best-seller lists. In the media, the book was recommended alike by friends and enemies of the new administration as an indispensable guide to "Reaganomics." And Gilder (whose most recent book before *Wealth and Poverty, Visible Man*, had sold virtually no copies) became, if not a household name, at least a much sought-after guest on television programs, subject of interviews in the print and broadcast media, public speaker, and participant in debates on economic and social policy.

But Gilder was still not fully a man whose time had come. *Wealth and Poverty* did indeed resonate, and widely, as an attack on socialism and planned economies, on the limits-to-growth school and its argument that the world's resources would soon be depleted, and on those economists who missed the dynamism of the American economy by reducing it to a series of equations. And the book made an undeniably popular case for the fundamental importance of the private sector in improving people's material condition, and for a legislative agenda that would enable that sector to perform even better through reductions in personal income-tax rates and taxes on capital gains, some alleviation of the burdens of governmental regulation, the dismantlement of a social-welfare system that was creating incentives for the poor to remain impoverished, and so on.

But Gilder's stated intention in *Wealth and Poverty* was much broader than this: he had set out to do nothing less than establish the moral basis of capitalism, to prove that, far from being immoral or at best amoral, as its critics and even its defenders had long charged, capitalism depends on, perpetuates, and serves as a force for good.

For some time now, this issue of the morality of capitalism has been a crucial one—as the frequent and virulent rhetorical attacks on it, and its comparative defenselessness in the face of them, alone would suggest. Its very survival has seemed to hang in the intellectual balance: for if a market economy is evil, it deserves to be overturned; and if it is morally neutral, then it depends on external and potentially fragile sources of legitimation. *Wealth and Poverty* begins and ends on the case for the morality of capitalism. This was its most novel, and, for Gilder, its most important theme.

It was also, in 1981, the aspect of *Wealth and Poverty* that was criticized the most. "Criticized" is too mild a word—on this issue Gilder was openly derided, ridiculed, and dismissed. To those who opposed the agenda of supply-side economics from the beginning (Michael Kinsley, writing at length in the *New Republic*, was one such), here were further grounds for opposition and contumely. And even to those disposed more favorably—even altogether favorably—here was a major flaw in an otherwise admirable undertaking. In this respect, *Wealth and Poverty* was by and large judged a failure.

It is a measure of Gilder's conviction that he has stuck lonely to his guns on this position, as he has to similarly touchy positions in the past. In *Sexual Suicide*, for example, a wide-ranging 1973 attack on feminism, he not only enraged feminists and the Left but espoused sufficiently extreme views—arguing, for example, against equal pay for equal work on the grounds that society ought to reinforce the male's anthropological role as provider—to antagonize even the sympathetic. Yet the theme of the male as provider also figured in his next book, *Naked Nomads*, about the necessary irresponsibilities of bachelorhood; was the linchpin of *Visible Man*, the story of a young, urban black; and would also be cited on occasion in *Wealth and Poverty*. As for his fundamental moral optimism about capitalism, perhaps to the dismay of those who thought they had corrected him on this matter, Gilder wrote nothing in the years after *Wealth and Poverty* to suggest he had modified his views. With the publication of his latest

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book, *The Spirit of Enterprise*,* it seems as if he may have been correct, after all, not to do so.

"CAPITALISM begins with giving"—so opens the case for the morality of capitalism in *Wealth and Poverty*. It is a statement that, stripped of its moral implications, can also be read as the first principle of supply-side economics—Say's Law, that supply creates its own demand. To Gilder, in fact, capitalism and supply-side economics, considered ideally, are one and the same, although his view of capitalism in *Wealth and Poverty* is much more inclusive than this, drawing politics and culture as well within capitalism's purview.

Gilder makes the case for capitalism along two different lines, one more or less anthropological, the other more or less metaphysical. It seems that in certain primitive tribes, there emerged traditions of elaborate feasts. A tribesman, according to Gilder, would accumulate his resources—often in fantastic quantity—and make a gift of them, in the form of a feast, to his fellow tribesmen. If these gifts were well received, the tribesman could hope it would be given unto himself in turn.

The givers, in Gilder's view, are primitive capitalists; the accumulation of resources is work and savings; the gifts are the first kind of investment:

> By giving a feast, the *mumi* imposed implicit debts on all his guests. By attending it, they accepted a liability to him. Through the gifts or investments of primitive capitalism, man created and extended obligations. These obligations led to reciprocal gifts and further obligations in a growing fabric of economic creation and exchange, with each giver hoping for greater returns but not assured of them, and with each recipient pushed to produce a further favor.

The morality of capitalism arises out of the "altruism" of these gifts. They are, it is true, made with the expectation of a return; but this expectation is ultimately only a hope—one based on faith in the ability to please one's fellows, and on their willingness to return one's favors. Since the return is not guaranteed—determined in advance of the gift—the giving itself remains an altruistic act. As with primitive tribesmen, so with the first makers of today's personal computers: no one knew, at first, just how successful these would be; a great deal of "giving," in the form of money, labor, and applied ingenuity, long preceded any return.

In the last chapter of *Wealth and Poverty*, called "The Necessity for Faith," we find the full flowering of the metaphysical argument for the morality of capitalism. Those who adhere to one or another form of socialism, Gilder writes, base their case for planning on a restricted and fundamentally mistaken view of the world and of man's capabilities:

> It is said that we must abandon economic freedom because our frontier is closed; because our biosphere is strained; because our resources are running out; because our technology is perverse; because our population rises; because our horizons are closing in. . . . We must tax and regulate and plan, redistribute our wealth and ration our consumption, because we have reached the end of openness.
>
> But quite to the contrary, these problems and crises are in themselves the new frontier; are themselves the mandate for individual and corporate competition and creativity; are themselves the reason why we cannot afford the consolations of planning and stasis.

The world is not fixed, Gilder says, because the mind of man is not fixed: the innovation of which man is capable in turn makes the world malleable. "The reason capitalism succeeds," he writes, "is that its laws accord with the laws of mind."

According to Gilder, these "laws of mind"—or the "crucial rules of creative thought"—are "faith, love, openness, conflict, and falsifiability." Faith is the intuitive leap—the leap of hypothesis—one makes before taking action. Love is one's commitment to new ideas. Openness is the willingness to have one's ideas challenged, whence comes conflict. Falsifiability is the possibility that one's idea will prove to be wrong. The corresponding "laws of capitalism"—the "crucial rules of economic innovation and production"—are "faith" (again), "altruism" (love), "investment" (openness), "competition" (conflict), and "bankruptcy" (falsifiability). The correspondence of these two sets of "laws"—and it is only in capitalism that such a correspondence occurs—constitutes the lasting moral foundation of capitalism, "the only appropriate system for a world in which all certitude is a sham."

THIS argument—widely derided, as I have mentioned—is addressed, in the main, to two different groups of people. One is made up of those who would replace capitalism with something different, or substantially transform it in the interest of "rationality," "compassion," etc.—those, in short, who think capitalism is unjust. Into this group fall socialists of all kinds, democratic and otherwise, and the proponents of large-scale redistribution of income from rich to poor; one could name in addition such moralists as the U.S. Catholic bishops, whose recent pastoral letter condemns the alleged neglect of the poor by our economic system (and by the Reagan administration), and one could even include here the partisans of "industrial policy," which by means of government is to enhance the development of promising "sunrise" industries and ease the inevitable decline of those whose sun is setting. Taken together, this group is on the Left, broadly construed.

But Gilder's second target is on the Right, also broadly construed, and it includes such writers as

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Daniel Bell, Christopher Lasch (erroneously), Robert Nisbet, and Irving Kristol. Among these thinkers, Gilder charges, "Capitalism has been presented as a transitory and conditional compromise: the worst possible system, as Churchill once said of democracy, except for all the others." This group, in fact, is his primary target, all the more so because its members have themselves mounted the most effective attacks against the Left, arguments on which Gilder, in *Wealth and Poverty*, draws freely. Thus, in the mid-1970's Daniel Bell observed that "The most unreported fact of our era is the death of socialism." The first sentence of *Wealth and Poverty* is: "The most important event in the recent history of ideas is the demise of the socialist dream."

But Gilder does not stop there. He goes on: "The second most important event is the failure of capitalism to win a corresponding triumph." And for this failure, Gilder holds Bell, Nisbet, Kristol, and others like them partly responsible. So it is that *Wealth and Poverty* is primarily an answer to the "neoconservative" critique of capitalism—at times, rather after the fashion of the junior professor who makes a name for himself by attacking his old dissertation adviser. This is an impression Gilder explicitly reinforced in a 1982 article in the *National Review* called "Why I Am Not a Neoconservative."

WHAT is the neoconservative analysis of capitalism's history and prospects, and does Gilder succeed in refuting it? Its terms are set out by Irving Kristol in his collection of essays, *Two Cheers for Capitalism* (1978), and by Daniel Bell in *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (1976). According to the neoconservative view,* the development of capitalism is indeed associated historically, as Gilder maintains, with faith, and specifically (following Max Weber) with the Protestant ethic, the spirit informing the bourgeois life and the thirteen virtues of Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography*: temperance, silence, order, resolution, frugality, industry, sincerity, justice, moderation, cleanliness, tranquillity, chastity, and humility. As Bell writes, the joining of the Protestant ethic, with its particular vision of the good life, to a free economy marked the creation of a morally justified capitalism.

But each of these two elements belongs to a separate "realm," in Bell's sociological architectonic. And the problems—to Bell, "contradictions"—of capitalism today derive precisely from the fact that the Protestant ethic no longer goes with the free economy. He writes: "The two realms which had historically been joined to produce a single character structure—that of the Puritan and of his calling—have now become unjoined."

Bell devotes a great deal of space in *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* to what he sees as the reasons behind this sundering. Briefly, the modernist movement in the arts (and in intellectual life) waged an assault on bourgeois values; the movement sought "to substitute for religion or morality an aesthetic justification of life; to create a work of art, to be a work of art—this alone provided meaning in man's effort to transcend himself." Modernism, carried to a logical extreme in the 1960's, yielded what Bell calls postmodernism, in which even an aesthetic justification was abandoned. Life became only what was instinctual and pleasurable; the rest was hollow, fraudulent, repressive. "What was once maintained as esoteric is now proclaimed as ideology, and what was once the property of an aristocracy of the spirit is now turned into the democratic property of the mass."

"Self-realization" thus became the goal and justification of each individual in a culture that "was no longer concerned with how to work and achieve but how to spend and enjoy." In this transformation, moreover, the free market was decisively complicit. The most important development here was the widespread growth, after World War I, of installment credit: "Previously," Bell writes, "one had to save in order to buy. But with credit cards one could indulge in instant gratification." This was a blow successfully aimed at "the heart of the Protestant ethic"—saving, frugality, abstinence, or deferred gratification—a "revolution in moral habit" that led to the "high consumption economy." In practical terms, the result has been hedonism and nihilism, as the means to pursue one's self-realization have been readily proffered by the market. In moral terms, capitalism has thereby lost its "transcendent justification."

Without that transcendent justification, there are no grounds for optimism concerning the future of capitalism. Nor will some facile conjoining of the "laws of capitalism" and the "laws of mind" suffice to provide such a justification. In the neoconservative view, Gilder's "mind," a bizarre combination of the scientific method and old-style bourgeois morality, simply does not conform to what is in fact the modern mind, let alone the post-modern mind.

Nor (according to the neoconservative critique) does Gilder succeed as an anthropologist. In order to prove that capitalist "giving" is itself moral, he

* It is fair to speak of "the" neoconservative view, but only with some qualification. This view emerged from the late 1960's through the mid-1970's, largely in the pages of the *Public Interest*, of which Kristol and Bell were co-editors until 1973, when Bell became chairman of its Publication Committee. Much of *Two Cheers for Capitalism* and *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* originally appeared there and then.

In his 1978 foreword to *Cultural Contradictions*, Bell vigorously protested the application to himself of the label "neoconservative" (which Kristol had embraced), and instead called himself "a socialist in economics, a liberal in politics, and a conservative in culture." He resigned as chairman of the *Public Interest* Publication Committee in 1982, and is no longer formally associated with the magazine.

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would have to show that there is no difference between this kind of "altruism" and the altruistic act performed with *no* hope of return. He would also have to show that this giving is not simply a means, once again, toward the fulfillment of the hedonistic wishes of the post-modern sensibility. Gilder has done neither of these things. There is thus no more basis in his anthropology than there is in his metaphysics for an optimistic assessment of the prospects for capitalism.

OR is there? Gilder's new book, *The Spirit of Enterprise*, is an analysis and celebration of the role of the entrepreneur in capitalism—a role, he persuasively argues, that has been woefully underappreciated:

> The prevailing assumption is that at any particular time the economy is a problem with a small number of solutions—limited by tastes, technologies, and natural resources—which can be expressed as a set of simultaneous equations. Within this scheme, the acknowledged role of the capitalist or entrepreneur is to mediate marginally among all the limiting conditions. . . . A dependent variable, the entrepreneur rapidly vanishes into the shadows of such imperious factors of production as land, labor, and capital, such massive numbers as money and aggregate demand.

This limited view of the entrepreneur fails to comprehend the central insight of supply-side economics (to Gilder, of capitalism): that supply creates its own demand. And supply itself derives not from "land, labor, and capital," the traditional factors of production in economics, but rather from the talents of the entrepreneur as they are brought to bear on these three factors. To understand capitalism, in other words, we must understand capitalists.

To that end, most of *The Spirit of Enterprise* consists of a series of portraits—some of them small biographies—of entrepreneurs. In most cases, the names of these men (they are all men) are not widely known; but their achievements are prodigious. We read, for example, the story of J.R. Simplot, an Idaho farmer and businessman, who was chiefly responsible for the frozen french-fried potato in general and the McDonald's french-fried potato in particular. Simplot subsequently provided essential start-up capital for a firm that would achieve a major breakthrough in the memory capacity of computer microchips; Gilder tells the story of the people behind this firm, Micron Technology, as well.

Then there is the story of John Masters, a middle-aged, unemployed geologist when he started a new business, Canadian Hunter Corporation, that "would go into the mountains of Alberta in 1973 when all the other companies were coming out, and would find, and in a sense embody, the solution to the energy crisis"—one of the world's largest reserves of natural gas, hitherto unknown. Gilder also writes about Japanese entrepreneurs (rebutting, along the way, the alleged importance of Japan's "industrial policy" to that country's remarkable postwar expansion): such men as Soichiro Honda, Konosuke Matsushita (Panasonic), and Genichi Kawakami (Yamaha). And there are sketches of refugees from Castro's Cuba —people who, contrary to the bad press they have suffered in connection with the drug trade, have in fact been almost solely responsible for reviving a decaying Miami, Florida.

It is, in short, an "economy of heroes" about which Gilder is writing, and it is testimony not only to the accomplishments of his subjects but also to Gilder's empathetic skill in presenting their stories that by the end there can be no denying them the place in the sun he accords them. But what is pathbreaking about *The Spirit of Enterprise* is that in it Gilder has substantially shifted the grounds of the argument for optimism away from the moralizing abstractions of *Wealth and Poverty*. Now he is writing not about the nature of man or the nature of mind, but about people. Interestingly, it is *this* Gilder, the participant/observer and psychologist concerned with what people do and what they think about what they do, rather than Gilder the anthropologist and metaphysician, who has something new and compelling to say about capitalism and its prospects.

Gilder generalizes about his subjects, but he also quotes them directly. Here, for example, is Roberto Goizueta, who left Cuba when Castro confiscated the Coca-Cola bottling plant there and who is now that company's chairman of the board and chief executive officer:

> One thing I learned is that the things you carry in your head, no one can take from you. . . . Don't attach too much importance to material things, because, as I know so well from my own experience in Cuba, one individual can take all those material things away from you.

Similarly, J.R. Simplot: "Capital is worthless if you don't have the brains to go with it."

And here is John Masters, the natural-gas explorer:

> Once an opportunity is generally known, it is pretty well gone. . . . You have to recognize that every "out front" maneuver you make is going to be lonely. But if you feel entirely comfortable, then you're not far enough ahead to do any good. That warm sense of everything going well is usually the body temperature at the center of the herd.

And Soichiro Honda:

> Many people dream of success. To me success can be achieved only through repeated failure and introspection. In fact, success represents 1 percent of your work which results only from the 99 percent that is called failure.

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THE themes Gilder draws from the lives of these men—and from what "entrepreneurs everywhere report"—are striking. First, as to their origins and motivations, he writes:

> In the dynamic of the entrepreneurial life, there is nearly always a crisis of breaking away. Whether it is physically leaving family and country, as for many immigrants, or betraying the expectations of parents or bonds of existing work, the breaking away entails guilt and anxiety and produces a drive to vindicate the departure.

Second, there is the "prime lesson of entrepreneurship": "The crowd is always wrong." This "contrarian" principle means that one must be willing to go alone, beyond John Masters's herd, to seek the greatest opportunities.

Third, there is the meaning of failure. When, from the late 1970's through the 1981-82 recession, the media reported that more businesses were failing than ever before, they neglected to add that more businesses were being *created* than ever before. In addition, they did not understand that when a businessman fails, he often gains a great deal of invaluable information that may lead to success on the second (or third or fourth . . .) attempt. Moreover, they did not see that businesses unable to adapt to changing conditions—those that have lost the entrepreneurial spirit—deserve to fail.

Finally, there is the matter of human creativity. These are men who generate new ideas and find or hew niches for them. But creativity also works in another way:

> It is the very essence of human creativity, . . . as Albert Hirschman has written, that it *always* comes as a surprise to us. If it didn't defy the odds, we could plan it and it would not be necessary. The unexpected boon, the industrial miracle, has become the predictable and providential surprise of capitalism. Entrepreneurs do not succeed through marginal increments. They succeed by shooting for the moon and hitting natural gas under the blast-off site.

Such is the character of entrepreneurs, whom Gilder numbers in the tens of millions in America today. Whether or not his estimate is too high—and even whether or not he is correct to focus most of his attention, as he does, on the very successful ones—the economy is driven by these people. And their number—the number of people whose heartfelt desire it is to *produce*, to "work and achieve," not just to "spend and enjoy" (in Daniel Bell's terms)—shows no sign of decreasing, and every sign of increasing. A high-consumption economy is also, necessarily, a high-production economy, and Gilder demonstrates why it is inaccurate and unjust to ascribe to the producers either only the urge to consume or only the urge to fulfill for money the desire of others to consume.

As a sociological fact, this is cheering news. "Post-modernism," in conjunction with a "high-consumption economy," so far has not left us only (or chiefly) with hedonism. "Out there," as it were, the spirit of enterprise, or the spirit of capitalism, seems to be flourishing. So we can at least put off facing the allegedly inevitable "contradictions of capitalism."

But there is a much larger issue here, one on which capitalism's lasting prospects may turn. Successful entrepreneurs, as Gilder describes them, strive to compensate for their sense of personal alienation; they embrace great risks, going in the opposite direction from the crowd; although they fail frequently, they are undeterred; they bring new conceptions to bear on difficult problems, or on things never before regarded as problems; and they often realize their success in ways entirely unforeseen. What does any of this have to do with the bourgeois virtues, the Protestant ethic, or Benjamin Franklin's temperance, silence, order, resolution, and frugality? The very least one can say is that those virtues simply do not encompass all the qualities George Gilder has found in his entrepreneurs. There are substantial differences; there may even be conflicts.

It would come as no surprise to Daniel Bell, of course, to hear that what drives American capitalism today bears at best an uncertain relation to the Protestant ethic. (It might even come as no surprise to George Gilder, though he would probably deny that it was so.) The question, however, is to what extent entrepreneurs—the real capitalists—have *ever* exemplified the Protestant ethic, and that alone. The desire to "work and achieve" is, to Gilder, distinctly more hard-edged than it is to Bell, and it is certainly not the equivalent of "the pursuit of wealth alone" (in other words, greed). It involves one in the continuing attempt to dominate nature, in the continuing "creative destruction" of the old in favor of the new, the making of new things under the sun. In this sense, it calls to mind, startlingly, not traditional bourgeois values but the temperament of the artist, as conceived, for example, by Nietzsche: the temperament of romanticism that would soon become (in part through the agency of Nietzsche) the temperament of modernism itself.

Two important differences between the artist and the entrepreneur should be immediately noted here. The first is that art does not necessarily thrive on newer and newer techniques; newer is not better *per se*, and by no persuasive device can a great modern work be said to have rendered Shakespeare, for example, obsolete. For capitalism, by contrast, newer *must* be better, or else it will fail; this is the essence of "creative destruction." The second is that while there may be such a thing as a great but neglected novel, there is no such thing as a great entrepreneur whom capitalism has failed to reward. In a free economy, profit or loss is an exact measure of the success or failure

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of creation. To an entrepreneur, as Gilder notes, capitalism is just.

All this having been said, however, the question still remains whether the modernist ethic—understood as the will to create, to "make it new," in Ezra Pound's famous phrase—does not serve as a better definition of the spirit of capitalism than the Protestant ethic ever did. A reading of Gilder argues powerfully that it does, and what is more, that this ethic, in which Bell's "Puritan" and his "calling" are replaced by the creative producer and his acts of creation, offers "transcendent justification" aplenty.

But if there is therefore a case to be made for the morality of capitalism, what about capitalists? The answer to this is that some are morally good and some are not; in no sense do they form a class about which such a generalization is appropriate. Unfortunately, this is an answer at which Gilder continues to balk. Though some of his entrepreneurs are clearly bad husbands and fathers, he cannot bring himself to say so without immediately apologizing on their behalf; to him their behavior is understandable, further evidence of their admirable devotion to their enterprises. In such instances, Gilder's empathy (not, as some of his critics have charged, his ideology) leads him to a false moral tidiness.

The stability of capitalism, however, does not depend on a successful businessman's being a good man as well. The sense of transcendent justification Gilder has found among the real capitalists is enough, sociologically speaking, to allay the neoconservative fear (and the Marxist hope) that capitalism will collapse of its own weight. This is by no means to say that the future of democratic capitalism is secure, or that its many opponents in the political and cultural "realms" will now fall silent. But neither need *their* opponents be silent, especially when they have in their company the formidable voice of George Gilder. Here, to convey a more complete sense of what *The Spirit of Enterprise* is like, is that voice in one of its more impassioned moments:

> The limits to growth are found not in God or nature, but in failures of faith and restrictions of law: all the doom-laden extrapolations of expertise that deny the infinite possibilities of creative men as they penetrate the frontiers of darkness that is always closing in on mortal minds, and reach—in risk and worship—for the inestimable treasures of light beyond.

"Infinite possibilities," "inestimable treasures"—*that* is optimism.

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Abandoned

THE ABANDONMENT OF THE JEWS: AMERICA AND THE HOLOCAUST 1941-1945. By DAVID S. WYMAN. *Pantheon. 444 pp. $19.95.*

THE JEWS WERE EXPENDABLE: FREE WORLD DIPLOMACY AND THE HOLOCAUST. By MONTY NOAM PENKOWER. *University of Illinois Press. 429 pp. $21.95.*

A REFUGE FROM DARKNESS: WILFRID ISRAEL AND THE RESCUE OF THE JEWS. By NAOMI SHEPHERD. *Pantheon. 291 pp. $18.95.*

Reviewed by RICHARD S. LEVY

THE first shots fired by the British after the outbreak of World War II killed two Jewish refugees attempting to gain entry into Palestine. In 1944, while various Allied government agencies were invoking the lack of available shipping as a reason why Jews could not be taken to safety, Liberty ships were returning empty from Europe, their captains complaining about the difficulty of finding proper ballast. Chaim Weizmann aptly summarized the plight of European Jewry in those days: "The world is divided into countries in which Jews cannot live and countries which they must not enter."

The three excellent books under review here provide answers to the question: why were not more Jews saved from the Holocaust? None suggests that Hitler's extermination policy, once under way, could have been undone, or that more than a small portion of his intended victims could have been saved. All three, however, show in concrete detail that much, much more could have been done to rescue Jews.

From slight written sources and the oral testimony of acquaintances, Naomi Shepherd pieces together the story of an obscure hero. Wilfrid Israel, son of a totally assimilated, wealthy German Jewish business family, led a privileged aesthete's existence. In mild rebellion against his father, he formed a sympathetic attachment to East European Jewish refugees during World War I and a commitment to Zionist socialism; he became a friend of Weizmann, Einstein, and Buber. Repelled by the business world, Israel nevertheless dutifully entered the family concern. In 1921, he involved himself in famine relief for Russia and witnessed for the first time human indifference to the deaths of millions.

With the rise of the Nazis in the early 1930's, Israel quickly recognized the impending disaster for German Jews. Since he himself held a British passport, it would have been easy for him to get out of Germany in 1933. But he remained until just before the war, out of a sense of obligation to the weaker victims of Nazism. Using his connections, bribery, and great ingenuity, and relying on a wholly improbable stamina, he arranged the escape of many children to Britain and Palestine and managed to free numerous individuals from concentration camps. In England from late 1939, he functioned as a German expert for various groups, preparing position papers for postwar relief and resettlement and trying to convince the British of the deadly peril facing European Jews. Returning from a mission to Jewish refugee camps in Spain and Portugal in 1943, Israel died when the plane he, the actor Leslie Howard, and eleven other passengers were traveling in was shot down by the Germans.

It is well that Israel's story has been preserved in this compassionate and restrained biography, which presents a view of rescue work as seen from the grassroots level. For this is an aspect of the story that neither David Wyman nor Monty Penkower deals with. Although both try to inject the personal element into their studies, their source material keeps them in the realms of high policy-making, where they concentrate on the role of the Allies in actually *preventing* large-scale rescue attempts of Jews.

Of the two books, Wyman's is the more important. Impressively researched, balanced in its judgments, devastating in its discussion of untaken opportunities, and informed by an essentially moral purpose, *The Abandonment of the Jews* makes a clear, largely persuasive argument. Penkower's *The Jews Were Expendable* is no less diligently researched, and in its own way represents exceptionally valuable scholarship. It takes the form of nine discrete articles, all related to the diplomacy of the Holocaust, four of them published previously. But the absence of an integrating interpretation or connecting narrative, and the frequent overlaps and repetitions, make it a difficult book to use. On all the central issues Penkower and Wyman are in basic agreement. In what follows I shall refer to both books, but the focus of my remarks will be on Wyman's.

DRAWING on his earlier *Paper Walls: America and the Refugee Crisis 1938-1941* (1968), Wyman outlines the historical basis for America's poor record in accepting refugees during the 1930's and 1940's. Fear of unemployment, deep-seated xenophobia, and widespread anti-Semitism among the American public supported a restrictive immigration quota system, in place since the 1920's and strongly defended by Congress. Neither the laws nor the reasons behind them had lost their force by the time the U.S. entered the war.

Wyman's narrative properly begins in the summer of 1942. In June and August of that year, information filtering out from Jewish and German sources revealed that the Nazis had begun the systematic murder of Jews and that an all-embracing program of annihilation had been decided upon in Berlin. (Penkower devotes an entire study to the tortuous process by which this news gained acceptance in the Western democracies.) By August 1942, 1.5 million Jews

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had already been murdered by the *Einsatzgruppen* and in the six death camps of Poland. But not until November 24, 1942 did the U.S. State Department admit the reliability of the evidence, by which time another million Jews had perished. Then, in Wyman's terms, "fourteen lost months" passed before President Roosevelt gave the go-ahead to set up a special agency—the War Refugee Board—for the rescue of those facing death at the hands of Hitler.

What took so long? Who or what was responsible for the dreadful delays, the heartbreaking missed chances so thoroughly documented by Penkower and Wyman?

Some time was needed to overcome the sheer unbelievability of the news about the Final Solution. A death sentence on an entire people was unique in history. Wyman cites opinion polls showing that, for a significant part of the American public, the Holocaust remained unbelievable right up to the liberation of the camps at the end of the war. Jews themselves, even the Jews of Palestine and the leaders of the Zionist movement, were slow to accept the truth or grasp the scope of the disaster. Those less personally touched reacted more cautiously and callously: documents from the British Foreign Office and the State Department speak of "typical Jewish hysteria" and exaggeration, well after the accumulated evidence pointed to an unprecedented human catastrophe.

Wyman searches for the reasons behind the lack of credence given the Holocaust, and ascribes responsibility to two sources. The mass media, despite abundant material from the wire services and the Jewish press, devoted little coverage to reports of the massacres or of independent rescue efforts. What stories did appear were often buried deep in the paper. In the ten newspapers from across the nation which Wyman has studied, the Holocaust was very rarely front-page news. The same can be said of the mass-circulation magazines. The record of the *Nation* and *New Republic* was better but, with their small circulation, hardly an adequate remedy for the silence of *Time*, *Life*, and *Newsweek*.

Wyman candidly admits to being at something of a loss to explain such negligence. Perhaps it was the baleful legacy of the atrocity stories knowingly spread by the Allies in World War I that made newspapers so cautious. Perhaps the news media were merely reflecting the indifference of the American public toward Jewish suffering. Whatever the reasons, the lack of interest is indisputable.

The other major bearers of responsibility for the remoteness of the Holocaust from the consciousness of Americans were the churches. The near-silence of the Protestant and Catholic churches—a matter of personal anguish to Wyman, the grandson of two Protestant ministers—is thoroughly documented in his book. With few exceptions, churchmen did little or nothing to change the attitudes of

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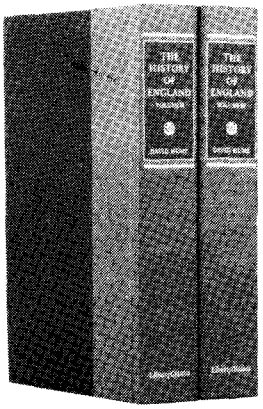

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Christians regarding immigrants, anti-Semitism, or the persecution of the innocent. Christian America (again with notable exceptions) simply did not care enough.

NEITHER Penkower nor Wyman, however, will accept the lack of awareness as a sufficient reason for the apathy of government or the diffidence of Jewish leaders. For whatever was the case in the mass media or among the public at large, responsible leaders in the Jewish community and in the organs of British and American government did have plenty of authenticated evidence. Why did *they* not do more?

Wyman rests part of his argument here on a muted but nonetheless clear criticism of the American Jewish leadership. Penkower is equally critical. But readers of these two books will find in them no evidence of inertia or passivity on the part of Jews. Public demonstrations, private contact with government leaders, fund-raising, courageous intervention in the danger zones, and personal sacrifice all form part of the historical record.

Wyman does not question the level of this activity but its quality. Its ". . . effectiveness was importantly diminished by [the] inability to mount a sustained or unified drive for government action, by diversion of energies into fighting among the several organizations, and by failure to assign top priority to the rescue issue." There is some truth in all these points. The established Jewish leaders in America, especially Stephen S. Wise, failing in health and hectically active, remained too uncritical of Roosevelt's patently clear indifference to Jewish survival. Many of FDR's Jewish advisers were reluctant to embarrass him with what might look to the world like special pleading for Jews. The rivalries among Jewish organizations—Wyman seems unaware of how constant a feature this is of Jewish life—led to some unedifying open conflicts.

But they never led to paralysis. Both Penkower (to the point of passion) and Wyman emphasize the effectiveness of one group, the so-called Bergsonites, in building public pressure that eventually helped lead to the creation of the War Refugee Board. This small group of Irgunists, who arrived in America to lobby for a separate Jewish armed force but soon turned their attention to rescue operations, were militants, unrestrained by any of the more staid conventions of American Jewish or mainstream Zionist political activity. Full-page newspaper advertisements, the recruitment of Hollywood personalities, the staging of elaborate pageants, an occasionally questionable use of funds—these were the weapons employed in their often sensational enterprises. They provoked opposition from the established organizations but also goaded them into a short-lived show of unity.

The object of this unity was not, however, rescue. The American Zionist Emergency Council, lobbying nationwide and in Washington, won three-fourths of the U.S. Congress to the idea of a Jewish commonwealth after the war. Wyman regrets this campaign as premature and deflecting, but argues that as an example of relatively unified Jewish activism it proves that the government could have been moved to genuine deeds of rescue earlier than it was. Had such unity been in place from the beginning, he implies, the fourteen months need not have been lost.

Yet the brunt of responsibility for the failure to rescue Jews falls not on American public opinion, or on Jewish disunity, but on the governmental agencies of the Allies, particularly the British Foreign Office and our State Department. The evidence both in Wyman and in Penkower is overwhelming. Every concrete proposal of rescue or relief, whether developed by Jews or non-Jews, whether by groups or individuals, met with resistance, obstruction, or outright sabotage.

The idea that Jews deserved special consideration because they were singled out by Hitler for total destruction was branded unpatriotic. The formula was voiced early and endlessly that the only hope for Jews was swift Allied victory, and that nothing should impede this effort, even though many of the rescue plans would not have required a significant diversion of war resources. (Wyman's chapter demonstrating the feasibility of bombing Auschwitz to destroy or at least slow down the machinery of death leaves contrary arguments in a shambles.*) Simply and directly, Wyman shows that the Foreign Office and State Department pursued policies "aimed at obstructing rescue possibilities and dampening public pressure for government action."

PENKOWER aims his palpable anger at the British, who, by sealing off Palestine and adhering heartlessly to the 1939 White Paper restrictions on Jewish immigration, caused the loss of thousands of lives. Other countries, like neutral Spain, Switzerland, and Turkey, lacking assurance that Jews would move on elsewhere, slowed the inflow of refugees to a trickle. British documents abound in references to these "useless people," and voice the fear that Hitler might "dump unwanted Jews" simply to embarrass His Majesty's Government.

Such inhumanity is indefensible. But Penkower goes too far when he implies that the Nazis turned to mass murder only after it became clear to them that the Jews could not be forcibly expelled to Palestine or elsewhere. There is no evidence for such a contention. He also gives too little credence to the reasons for British implacability. There were solid grounds for believing that a dramatic increase in Jewish immigration to Palestine might result in serious Arab unrest. British concessions to the needs of Jewish refugees might have provided an extra incentive to several Arab leaders, already openly flirting with the Nazis, to enter more fully into the enemy camp. The consequent need to divert British troops to maintain order in the Middle East had to be another concern of the Foreign Office. Yet Penkower is surely right to point out that the British did

* This chapter originally appeared as an article in COMMENTARY, "Why Auschwitz Was Never Bombed," May 1978.

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less to save Jews than their diplomatic or military position would have warranted. They had no legitimate grounds for opposing the establishment of havens for Jews *outside* Palestine; nevertheless, they did so oppose it.

WITH less passion but no less forcefulness, Wyman indicts the State Department. In my opinion, this is a more proper emphasis. The United States possessed greater resources for launching a meaningful rescue program and would have had to face fewer serious political-diplomatic consequences. Yet thanks to the administrative policies of the State Department only 21,000 refugees were allowed to enter the United States during the war, a mere 10 percent of what was admissible under the stringent quota system.

The lax leadership of Secretary of State Cordell Hull allowed middle- and low-level officials, primarily in the Visa and European Affairs divisions, to set policy and to perform classic acts of bureaucratic obstructionism. Foot-dragging, the withholding of information, the impulse to protect departmental turf and to block "outside" initiatives, the reflex of referring urgent plans to moribund committees—these techniques were in constant use during the fourteen lost months. Thus, what in peacetime would have been no more than an annoyance became, during the war, a death sentence for thousands who might have otherwise been saved.

IN *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Hannah Arendt wrote about a new kind of crime that became visible for the first time during the Holocaust: bureaucratic murder. Remote though he was from the actual killing, Eichmann was nonetheless more responsible for the deaths of innocent Jews than the actual wielders of the fatal weapons. On the evidence provided by these three books, readers may be tempted to consider another new category of crime: bureaucratic complicity in murder.

Wyman resists this temptation. He, Penkower, and Shepherd are concerned to show that there were decent, compassionate men working in official capacities for the Allies; there were just not enough of them. Moreover, even when examining the motives of the State Department obstructionists, Wyman sticks carefully to the demonstrable facts. Some actually believed that the Jews could not be helped, or that dealing for Jews with Hitler's shaky allies was still dealing with the enemy. Others worried that Roosevelt's reelection chances might be jeopardized among the electorate at large if significent numbers of Jews were allowed into the country; FDR had always been subject to charges of catering to Jews.

Wyman is chary of accusing the culprits of personal anti-Semitism. On this count, he states, his scru-

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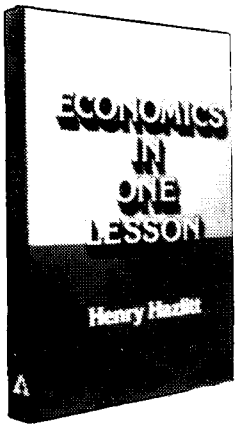

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tiny of the evidence is inconclusive. That may be owing to his notion of anti-Semitism, which is rather narrowly limited to the coarser varieties of the phenomenon, the sort that produces hate-mail and doggerel, and that shows up in the expressed opinions of those too unsophisticated to hide their beliefs. To me, at least, the evidence Wyman does present concerning the attitudes of State Department personnel strongly suggests the existence of anti-Semitism of the elitist variety. In any case, anti-Semitic attitudes do not always leave their imprint on the written record. Deeds are a better indication than diaries and memoranda. And in this regard, one thing is certain: these men treated Jews differently from the way they treated other Europeans fleeing Hitler. Wyman and Penkower cite numerous instances of much greater flexibility when it came to saving Yugoslavs and Frenchmen, or when it came to bringing relief to starving Greeks. In these cases, the usual excuses about inadequate shipping and fears of aiding the enemy by feeding his victims were swept away.

MOTIVES aside, Wyman builds his case against the State Department so strongly that he somewhat weakens the other strand of his argument, raising doubts that even a totally unified, sustained public campaign waged by American Jews could, of itself, have led to an earlier creation of the War Refugee Board (WRB). What finally prompted FDR to abolish the State Department monopoly on refugee questions was not only the effective propaganda of the Bergsonites—a resolution in favor of a WRB-like body was threatening in Congress—but the approaching elections and a brewing political scandal.

The State Department had quashed a plan to ransom 70,000 Rumanian Jews who had been driven into the squalid camps of Transnistria. This aroused the suspicions of four (non-Jewish) lawyers in the Treasury Department, who thereupon undertook to investigate the full record of State Department obstructionism. On the basis of the detailed report they submitted, Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau was prodded into intervening personally with FDR.

Both Penkower and Wyman properly give much weight to Treasury's action, which was independent of the campaign of the Bergson group. (One of the four lawyers, outraged at the State Department's delaying tactics, described them as a case of *para delicto*—equal guilt; presumably, he meant guilt equal to that of the Nazis.) Without Morgenthau's initiative and the threat of exposure, even a far more unified Jewish public-relations campaign might have failed in its objectives. It is doubtful, therefore, that Wyman's "fourteen lost months" between acknowledgment of the Holocaust in November 1942 and creation of the WRB could have been drastically foreshortened by more determined Jewish efforts.

In the sad history of attempts to save Jews from the Holocaust, even the creation of the WRB comes as an anticlimax. It really looks good only in relation to what went before. Bureaucratic delay still impeded its work. Two weeks passed before an executive director could be named. FDR lost interest immediately. The Board received almost no appropriations, and had to rely on Jewish organizations for 90 percent of its limited funds. And it still had to deal with rear-guard actions from the State Department and the British Foreign Office.

Nevertheless, a few dedicated, energetic, and imaginative people, working closely with Jewish and non-Jewish agencies of relief and rescue, were able to save approximately 200,000 Jews and 20,000 non-Jews before the end of the war. Wyman is quite correct: the WRB was what had been needed from the beginning.

THE lessons of these three books are dispiriting. They have to do with power and powerlessness. It was tragic for the Jews that only their enemies perceived them as enormously powerful. Hitler, even from his bunker, never ceased regarding them as the omnipotent fomenters of war. Himmler thought that offering to save a few Jewish lives would be sufficient leverage to win

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a separate peace for Germany with the West. Antonescu of Rumania and Horthy of Hungary operated under similar fantasies.

But the "friends" of the Jews, the Western democracies, knew exactly how negligible a factor they were. Britain could be sure that the Jews had no option but to work for Allied victory. FDR similarly recognized how powerless American Jews were politically. His indifference to the fate of European Jewry was made easier by the knowledge that American Jews could not bring themselves to vote for anyone else.

Ultimately, it was not the lack of will but the lack of military, governmental, or even financial resources—the lack of power—that kept American Jews from doing more, that thwarted their efforts to persuade those who did have power to use it in time to save more Jews. In this sense, above all, the Jews were expendable and abandoned.

Graves of Academe

POISONED IVY. By BENJAMIN HART. Foreword by WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY, JR. *Stein & Day. 254 pp. $16.95.*

Reviewed by PETER SHAW

THE rightward shift of the American political Center that can now be seen to have begun with the first election of Richard Nixon in 1968 was accompanied by a leftward shift among American university faculties and administrations. Although college students themselves eventually moved away from the Left, in the 1970's the minority of them who continued to favor radical causes enjoyed the greatest campus visibility and official approval. Only in 1980 did a group of conservative students at Dartmouth found a newspaper and begin to challenge what had become a distinctly liberal university establishment. By 1982 there were some eighty similiar publications in operation.

The Dartmouth *Review*, of which Benjamin Hart, class of 1981, was the student publisher, set out to lampoon, ridicule, vilify, and denounce the reigning orthodoxies of the college administration, faculty, and activist student organizations. The issues raised by the Dartmouth *Review* ranged from the college's permissive system of electives that, according to Hart, made it possible to graduate from Dartmouth "without ever having read a word of Shakespeare, Dante, or Homer," to "the obviously political academic departments—Black Studies, Urban Studies, Native American Studies, Women's Studies." A favorite target of attack was the college-funded Tucker Foundation, which sponsored

> anti-nuclear demonstrations; draft-evasion panels; pro-lesbian films and workshops; lectures against United States involve-

PETER SHAW *is currently Visiting Professor of English at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville.*

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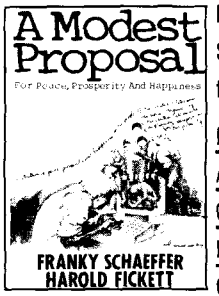

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ment in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, or anywhere else; marches against the college's investment in corporations that do business with South Africa; and abortion information centers.

But like their flag-burning predecessors of the 60's, the new protesters recognized the still greater value of focusing on symbolic issues, among them, at Dartmouth, the singing of banned college songs and the use by athletic teams of the college's American Indian symbol, a use that had been discontinued by the administration on grounds that it demeaned the Indians.

By these and other means the *Review* and its supporters simultaneously gained national attention and drove the liberal Dartmouth establishment into a frenzy. For, as Hart puts it in one of his trenchant observations, "The same people who talk about 'the importance of tolerance,' 'the need for diversity,' and why 'we must listen to other opinions,' are usually astounded to discover that there actually is another opinion."

In *Poisoned Ivy*, Hart sets the founding of the *Review* and its battles in the context of his personal experiences as a Dartmouth student. The prospective freshman who reads his account will get a feeling for the personal friendship and fellowship offered by fraternities; some youthfully sophisticated pointers on how to get along with young women, especially if they present the challenge of holding different political views; a particularly vivid evocation of the spirit engendered by sports; and some sense of the impact on a young mind of great books, the big ideas, and informed religious faith. (Like the Indian symbol, some of these subjects are stand-ins for styles and attitudes calculated to challenge enlightened liberal tastes, and thus have their bearing on the ideological wars Hart was waging.)

For those well past the college experience, Hart's extensive treatment of how he discovered the classics, religious faith, and patriotism will be of less interest than his all-too-brief and impressionistic report on the liberal establishment's reaction to the activities of the Dartmouth *Review* group. That establishment acted as though what it had learned best from the 60's, the period that brought it to power, was the peril of tolerating dissent. Legal obstacles were put in the way of the *Review*'s publication and distribution, and one of the editors was brought up on disciplinary charges, quite evidently to discourage the others.

In recounting these and similar events, Hart is at his best in pointing up the contradictions between liberal principles and practices. He notes, for example, that whereas his opponents condemned criticism of minority and women's programs as "emotional violence" that caused "emotional damage," no restraints were ever invoked or practiced when it came to invective against Hart's group. Still, although no one familiar with the contemporary university can doubt Hart's account of the liberal intolerance he helped bring out into the open, his casual presentation of the evidence makes one uneasy about the details. Thus, he describes how the Dartmouth *Review* was founded—it was a response to the firing of the conservative editor of the liberal campus newspaper—but does not fully set forth the circumstances of that firing. Nor does he offer any evidence for the claim that "it was not at all unusual for students to be thrown out of Dartmouth on charges of *racism* and *sexism*" (his emphasis). Nor, finally, does he ever describe the famous incident in which, while distributing the *Review*, he himself was bitten on the chest by a black college administrator. Did Hart, at the time, behave in the insolent manner he elsewhere ascribes to himself? If so, the administration is certainly no less dishonored by the act, yet one's sense of the situation is somewhat altered.

Similarly with Hart's picture of a spontaneous and embattled insurgency by a few underdog, high-spirited undergraduates. His own remarks hint that the founding of the *Review* actually depended on financial and ideological support from an already organized movement of wealthy and influential alumni. The first issue of the paper contained both an article by a

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newly installed conservative trustee and a column by William F. Buckley, Jr. Hart never explains his own role on the *Review*, but it must have included seeking advice from his father, Jeffrey Hart, an editor of Buckley's *National Review* and a professor of English at Dartmouth.

One senses, too, that the *Review* was a good deal more outrageous than Hart lets on. He reports that its pages were "in good taste"; he describes one article denounced by the liberals as "sober and objective" and another as "mild" and "eminently respectable." But it was not these qualities that attracted national media attention and put the editors on television. With some justice, Hart is able to assert that student energy has passed from the radicals of the 60's to the conservatives of the 80's. But he does not notice the extent to which his tactics, which included rhetorical excess and personal insult, were reminiscent of the earlier period's styles of dissent.

There is no doubt that conservative students have been instrumental in exposing the fatuity of liberal campus orthodoxy, and in demonstrating liberalism's capacity for repressive intolerance when put under pressure. The rest of the student body, though, along with some others who also oppose the present establishment, would probably prefer a different style of opposition. It is too bad that at present no other intellectual force has come to the fore to join in the battle that those like Benjamin Hart had the temerity to initiate.

The Red Marshal

THE TSAR'S LIEUTENANT: THE SOVIET MARSHAL. By THOMAS G. BUTSON. *Praeger. 281 pp. $27.95.*

Reviewed by
HENRIK BERING-JENSEN

WHEN Soviet chief of staff Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov stepped in front of the TV cameras to deliver the official explanation for

HENRIK BERING-JENSEN *is a Danish critic and journalist currently living in the United States.*

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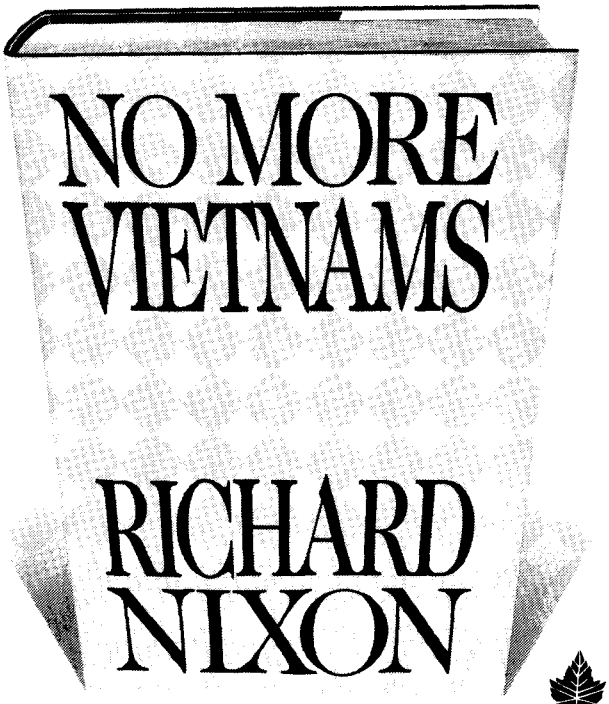

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the 1983 downing of Korean Air Lines Flight 007, editors all over the world were sent scurrying to their files for material on this newest and most unexpected of Soviet public-relations men. Except for the standard *Pravda* portrait, they did not find much. And the frantic and self-contradictory efforts to explain Ogarkov's sudden demotion precisely one year later revealed more about Western hopes and fears than they did about the inner workings of the Soviet top military establishment. The Soviet military leadership remains an anonymous lot.

In the barren waste that generally represents Western writing about Soviet military figures, it is therefore a surprise to find a book like Thomas G. Butson's *The Tsar's Lieutenant*, a readable as well as grimly instructive tale. The individual in question is Michael Nikolaiev Tukhachevsky, who played a key military role in the early days of the revolution and who is now regarded as the father of the Red Army. Butson's efforts have been facilitated somewhat by the fact that Tukhachevsky was a slightly more public figure than his modern counterparts—a patron of artists and musicians, among them the composer Shostakovich, who credited Tukhachevsky with saving his life in the purges.

As a junior lieutenant in the czarist guards, Tukhachevsky was captured by the Germans in the Russian debacle of World War I. Several escape attempts and a variety of camps later, he became one of the "incorrigibles" in the Bavarian prison fortress Ingolstadt IX, which also held a young Frenchman named Charles de Gaulle. Ingolstadt was reported to be escape-proof, but this did not deter Tukhachevsky. Having sprinkled his belongings with ground-up tobacco to throw off the dogs, he broke out and began the long trek back through the lines.

While he had been in prison, the world had changed dramatically. The treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1918 had taken Russia out of the war, and the country had been plunged into civil war. Once home again, Tukhachevsky joined the Red Army, determined to become a general at twenty-five (or the equivalent, since the traditional rank had been abolished). One obstacle was the debate over the propriety of using former czarist officers and NCO's in the new army. Here expediency won out: the Red Army needed professional soldiers, and Lenin had supported Trotsky in his recommendation that so-called "military specialists" be retained.

As Butson reminds us, the civil war of 1918-21 was fought over vast distances and across uncertain lines of battle. Both sides inflicted great hardships on the peasant population, and both sides suffered from poor military leadership. The Bolsheviks' chief advantage lay in their ideological zeal and in the corruption and disunity of their opponents, who had no clear political vision of what they might do once the fighting was over. Tukhachevsky, who had risen with great speed, fought hard to improve the Red command structure and distinguished himself by winning crucial battles on the Volga front and in the south.

His prospects suffered a temporary setback in 1920 when the Red Army wanted to teach a lesson to nationalist Poland and its leader Joseph Pilsudski for trying to exploit Russia's internal turmoil. Pilsudski's forces were repelled, and suddenly the alluring possibility of a Bolshevik Poland seemed to present itself. But here the Soviet commanders overreached themselves. Before Warsaw they encountered stiff opposition; the expected spontaneous uprising of Polish workers failed to materialize, and Russians in the tens of thousands were taken prisoner and great amounts of matériel and ammunition were lost. Tukhachevsky was blamed for having advanced too fast; he himself blamed his fellow commander Aleksandr Yegorov and the commissar for the Southwestern front, Joseph Stalin, for their lack of cooperation. As Butson points out, one consequence of the Soviet defeat was that the idea of spreading the revolution was scrapped for a generation. Unfortunately, another was to foster

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a myth of Polish military strength, which in the 30's helped lull the British and French into their policy of appeasement toward Germany.

Tukhachevsky's chance to make up for Poland came with the Kronstadt rebellion in 1921, in which the sailors of the Baltic naval base rose against the Moscow regime, and revolt threatened to engulf the region. The demands for free speech, for free assembly, and for the peasant's right to till his own plot could not be met by the Bolsheviks.* Although the island fortifications were impressive, Tukhachevsky found their weak spot by attacking through the frozen harbor. He confirmed his reputation for ruthlessness by carrying out Trotsky's promise to shoot the rebels like pheasants, a performance he was to repeat later that same year as he quelled uprisings in the Russian heartland. Tukhachevsky's readiness to use the Red Army as an instrument of internal repression set a precedent for similar actions in Hungary and Czechoslovakia long after his death.

BUT it is for his political role as the architect of the Red Army that Tukhachevsky is chiefly remembered today. The military controversy of the 20's concerned the kind of force the Soviet Union should develop, a militia or a standing army. On this point Tukhachevsky found himself in opposition to Trotsky, who argued in favor of a militia system, designed to meet equally the requirements of labor and defense. When not engaged in military operations, the mobilized troops would work in close cooperation with local industry on projects of reconstruction and production. The plan was further meant to insure the proletariat's control over the army. As Butson suggests, Trotsky saw Russia's chief need militarily at the time as being able to consolidate the revolution, not to extend it.

* As a result of Kronstadt, however, and of the general economic collapse, Lenin reversed previous practices with the New Economic Policy (NEP) which was designed to placate peasant hostility. This short respite for the Russian peasant ended with Stalin's first Five-Year Plan.

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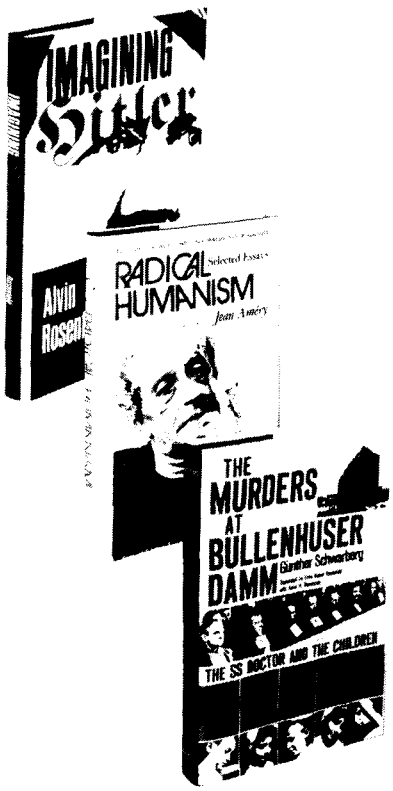

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Tukhachevsky, by contrast, held that with the advent of mechanized warfare, the yeoman soldier was a romantic anachronism. He remorselessly exposed the flaws of Trotsky's scheme, emphasizing the organizational weaknesses and the problems of mobilization and communication. He stressed instead the offensive role of the army. Undeterred by the Polish misadventure, Tukhachevsky predicted a day when the revolution would be carried abroad on Red bayonets. For this purpose Russia needed a highly mobile attack force, well equipped and with pride in its traditions. Initially the necessary modernization was to be achieved through cooperation with the German Reichswehr under the treaties of Rapallo and Berlin. In return for secret facilities in Russia (a blatant circumvention of the strictures imposed by the Versailles treaty), Germany would share the results of its testing with the Russians.

As for military innovation, Butson credits Tukhachevsky with being the first senior officer to recognize the use of paratroops for offensive operations. Russia thus had its first experimental airborne units years ahead of anyone else. Likewise, it was through his encouragement that Soviet scientists pursued the primitive rocket experiments that led to the highly effective Katyusha weapons of World War II, popularly known as Stalin organs.

TUKHACHEVSKY's career reached its high point in 1935 when he was made Marshal of the Soviet Union. But trouble lay ahead. In response to the assassination of Leningrad boss Sergei Kirov the year before, Stalin had launched the series of purges that were to culminate in 1937-38. In the beginning the army was left alone, but then came the arrest of two of Tukhachevsky's associates. One by one the men around him were arrested until finally his own turn came on May 26, 1937. He was accused of collaborating with the Germans, an absurd charge because ever since Hitler's takeover in 1933 he had ceaselessly warned against the dangers of the new Germany and had worked for the formation of an anti-German coalition.

The problem remains how to account for Stalin's apparently suicidal decapitation of the army, which threw the whole military apparatus into turmoil, and left the country fatally unprepared for Hitler's attack. At first it was thought to be the result of a German plot, designed to weaken the Soviet military at its heart, but most of the evidence now suggests that the frame-up of Tukhachevsky predated these German efforts. More likely, the explanation is to be found in the deep-rooted Communist fear of Bonapartism, the fear of a military takeover. The frequent comparisons of Tukhachevsky with the young Napoleon could hardly have endeared him to Stalin. Although there is no evidence of an army plot against Stalin, the army was the last group capable of challenging his authority, and in Stalin's mind the actual and the potential threat had a way of coalescing. As one noted Stalin biographer has put it, Stalin's dilemma was this: in the event of war, these were the men he would need most, yet at the same time they were the men who could be most dangerous to his personal position in the first days of a national emergency. The urge for self-preservation proved the stronger.

BUTSON describes the grotesque session of the Military Soviet of the Defense Commissariat, where 120 commanders were summoned, searched, and relieved of their sidearms, and then presented with the blue folders containing the depositions against Tukhachevsky and his associates; all the while, new names were added to the lists. Tukhachevsky was executed late in the spring of 1937; members of his family were shot or deported. He spent his last days writing in his cell, predicting that Hitler would attack in the spring of 1941 with up to 200 mobile divisions. The actual date turned out to be June 22, 1941, the number of divisions 180.

At the time, many refused to believe Stalin capable of such folly, and this in turn gave birth to rumors that Tukhachevsky had been spared and was held in a secret command center, from which, like a Soviet Barbarossa, he

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directed the victorious armies of the Soviet Union against its enemies.

Second-guessing history is an endlessly intriguing, if ultimately futile, game. Nikita Khrushchev for one was among those who believed that Russia's initial catastrophe might have been mitigated if Tukhachevsky with his intimate knowledge of German strategic thought and of its officer corps had survived. He had, for example, advocated a whole string of fortifications in the west that were never completed. As Butson notes, it is significant that the one place where German advances ran into trouble from the beginning was Tukhachevsky's old military district of Leningrad.

Tukhachevsky's fate clearly exemplifies the irrationality of a system that devours its own best servants out of fear. Regrettably for the rest of the world, Tukhachevsky's ideas did not perish with him. The Soviet army of today is very much a realization of his original vision.

The Real Ike

EISENHOWER: THE PRESIDENCY. By STEPHEN E. AMBROSE. *Simon & Schuster. 750 pp. $24.95.*

Reviewed by SPENCER WARREN

As EARLY impressions have given way to historical judgments, the reputation of Dwight D. Eisenhower as President has risen sharply. The release of a great mass of private papers in the past decade has inspired a number of accounts of the Eisenhower Presidency which have undermined the widely held view of Ike as a lazy, bland, uninvolved chief executive, one who remained above politics and let others run the government for him. The revisionists have established that Eisenhower most certainly was in control. He is now seen as a shrewd, even cunning, President, who, working through subordinates like John Foster Dulles and Sherman Adams, practiced a studied mode of indirect leadership that he believed made him most effective. As Richard Nixon, himself an object of Eisenhower's craft, observes in his inimitable style in *Six Crises*, Eisenhower "was a far more complex and devious man than most people realized, in the best sense of these words."

We now have what is likely to be the leading biography of Eisenhower for some time, by the historian Stephen Ambrose. The first volume took Ike up to his election as President in 1952; this one recounts his Presidency and final years.

Describing Eisenhower as a "great and good man" who gave us eight years of peace and prosperity, Ambrose places him just below the top rank among Presidents. Eisenhower's reputation undoubtedly has improved by contrast with the failed Presidencies of the men who held the office in the twenty years after he left. This is particularly true in foreign affairs, where his leading claims can be made. He faced a series of crises during the tensest period of the cold war, more in number and more threatening than any (except for the Cuban crisis in 1962) faced by his successors. Eisenhower patiently resolved each crisis in a way favoring U.S. interests, without war and without losing a single American soldier. He ended the Korean war, kept the U.S. out of war in Indochina, twice prevented war with the Chinese Communists over Quemoy and Matsu, limited Western losses in the Suez crisis (though many would disagree here), and successfully diffused the 1958-59 Berlin crisis.

Ambrose recounts how, on repeated occasions, Eisenhower withstood strong pressure from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Secretary of State Dulles, Vice President Nixon, and many in Congress, and decided against military intervention while

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still preserving the U.S. position. In meeting these challenges, Eisenhower demonstrated powers of incisive analysis, great coolness under pressure, independent judgment, confidence, and courage. And it was he alone who made the decisions; Dulles executed them. It is quite possible that without a man of Eisenhower's military judgment in the White House, we would have gone to war in the 50's, perhaps even nuclear war. Ambrose builds a persuasive case for the point advanced by Murray Kempton in his 1967 revisionist article on Eisenhower, namely, that, at least in the foreign arena, he was the "President most superbly equipped for truly consequential decisions we may ever have had."

Eisenhower succeeded in averting war while preserving America's worldwide position because he understood the proper relation of power to peace. In the great crises he faced, Eisenhower pulled off the difficult feat of maintaining U.S. credibility without resorting to force. His support for a strong defense, his military reputation, and the tough rhetoric he and Dulles employed enabled him to make credible threats—calculatedly ambiguous ones—that on several dangerous occasions helped to avert war and, in the case of Korea, to settle conflict. This masterly conduct of a policy of peace-through-strength, by a man who was not afraid to use force if need be, merits study by those today who are loudest in their professed desire for peace.

Yet during his second term, especially after the launching of Sputnik in October 1957, Eisenhower came under sharp attack for allegedly neglecting U.S. defenses. It seems a bit odd today to read the criticisms made by Democrats, the New York *Times*, and other liberal bastions about bomber- and missile-gaps and other supposed strategic deficiencies. In Ambrose's view, Eisenhower was at his finest in calmly opposing the national clamor for a crash build-up, including a $30-billion nationwide fallout-shelter program, during the near-panic that followed Sputnik. We now know that Ike was right and his critics wrong; there were no gaps in the strategic area, and under his defense program the U.S. enjoyed vast nuclear superiority over the Soviets in the 1950's and into the 1960's.

Eisenhower was the great general who struggled both to insure America's security and to slow the arms race. His supreme effort went into the search for nuclear disarmament; his greatest disappointment was probably the collapse of the 1960 summit following the U-2 incident. At the meeting with Khrushchev, he had hoped to reach a test-ban agreement as his final, crowning act of statesmanship. He had decided to accept a ban on all nuclear testing above and below ground, including a temporary moratorium on all underground tests below the verifiable level. The Pentagon, the CIA, and many atomic scientists were staunchly opposed, particularly to the moratorium, for which we would have had to rely on Soviet good faith. It is questionable whether agreement would ever have been reached on the details for on-site inspection, some form of which the Soviets had agreed to, and it is even more doubtful that the Soviets would have abided by the moratorium. But Eisenhower felt so strongly about the dangers of the arms race that, relying on his own military judgment, he overrode his advisers.

ANY President must also be assessed on his economic policies, which, unfortunately, this book hardly touches upon. Eisenhower believed strongly that excessive government spending endangered the nation's economy. His tight-fisted budget policies were seen by many during the Keynesian heyday of the 1960's as hopelessly narrow-minded, but the rampant inflation and stagnating living standards of the 1970's, which followed the explosive growth of government after he left office, make them appear rather more far-sighted today. Yet Eisenhower's austerity policies—he opposed major tax reductions—and the two recessions that occurred during his Presidency, particularly the severe one of 1957-58, set the stage for the Republican debacle in the 1958 elections. This relegated the Republicans to the Depression-era minority status from which they had only just recovered in the 1940's, and from which they may only just be reemerging today more than twenty-five years later (though Watergate is perhaps equally responsible).

Alas, on the two most controversial domestic issues of his time, Eisenhower fell short. The confidence and command he displayed in facing our enemies abroad were missing at home when he confronted the problems of racial segregation and Senator Joseph McCarthy.

On the great moral issue of civil rights, Eisenhower failed, badly. Ambrose documents his callousness to the problem of racial segregation. He refused to endorse the Supreme Court's watershed 1954 *Brown* decision. He always said segregation was wrong, but just as often explained it was a problem that could be solved only by an evolution in attitudes, rather than by legal compulsion. In this he was proved wrong, as is demonstrated by the vast change in racial attitudes that followed the judicial and legislative reforms of the 1950's and 60's.

While paying lip-service to equality and proposing mild civil-rights legislation, Eisenhower often expressed as much or more sympathy for Southern segregationists as for their victims, who, he sometimes said, were too aggressive in pressing their claims. In 1957, when vacationing in Georgia, he refused to meet with Martin Luther King, Jr. His "moderation" and support for an "evolutionary" approach was in reality a policy of indifference that encouraged the South in its efforts to defy the Supreme Court and set the stage for the crises of the 1960's. Had he taken the lead, Republicans might, indeed, have regained much of the black vote they had lost in the 1930's.

Eisenhower has long been criticized for not challenging McCarthy, notably in the famous incident during the 1952 campaign when he excised from a speech he was to give in McCarthy's presence a paragraph praising General Marshall. (Marshall, who had largely

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made Ike's career in the war, had been viciously attacked by the Senator.) With new evidence, we now know that, true to his indirect style of leadership, Eisenhower surreptitiously maneuvered to help topple the Senator before and during the fateful Army-McCarthy hearings in 1954. Nevertheless his handling of McCarthy (and of civil rights) demonstrates the limitations of his mode of leadership.

Eisenhower recognized that the President must perform two functions, as sovereign head of state and as head of government. In the former, he is the embodiment of the people and must appear above politics and controversy. To be effective in the latter, he must do just the opposite. Eisenhower performed this second function in secret. He followed Machiavelli's advice to the Prince, "Everyone sees what you appear to be. Few experience what you really are." He was so successful at this that it took more than ten years after he left office for people to begin to learn the truth about his Presidency.

But in striving to separate his sovereign and prime-ministerial functions, Eisenhower often went too far. As the embodiment of the nation's ideals and principles, the President needs not only to enunciate them as generalities, but to apply them to matters at hand. Eisenhower's neutralist stance on civil rights demoralized millions of Americans, black and white, who looked to their President to bring reality to the nation's ideals.

With regard to McCarthy, Eisenhower's secretive campaign may have been the only way to deal with the popular Senator, as Fred Greenstein argues in his Eisenhower book, *The Hidden-Hand Presidency*. But it carried heavy costs. McCarthy intimidated thousands of Americans, many of them federal employees who looked to Eisenhower as their defender. These people, most of them innocent of wrongdoing, needed Ike's visible protection and support, but they did not get it until he moved to protect the Army against McCarthy's charges in 1954. Many were victimized by Ike's own loyalty program. While he

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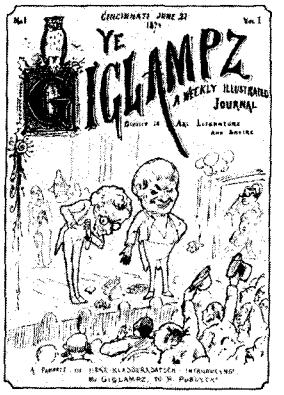

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was President, many careers were ruined, 830 employees of the Voice of America were dismissed, and books in its libraries were burned, all to appease McCarthy. How far above controversy must the chief of state stand?

AMBROSE does not provide many details on what motivated Eisenhower's indirect mode of leadership; without these it is difficult to understand his character. Apparently his strategy was conscious and well thought-out. But was there more to it? The question needs to be asked because at times there is a pattern of inaction in Eisenhower's career that can be interpreted as indecisiveness rather than as evidence of a shrewd understanding of power. Often he appeared flabby and vacillating.

One example has to do with Eisenhower's relationship with Richard Nixon. Ambrose explains that while Eisenhower respected his lieutenant's intelligence, industry, and loyalty, he had outweighing reservations about him, and preferred to have another running mate in 1956. Indeed, in 1960 Eisenhower tried to persuade others to enter the race against Nixon. In 1956 he gave strong hints to Nixon, and used others, to try to persuade him to remove himself from the ticket. But Eisenhower would never act directly to remove Nixon. Ambrose concludes that he retained Nixon because he appreciated some of his qualities, the party wanted him, and because no one better could be found. But it is difficult to accept that this popular President was so limited in his choice of a likely successor, particularly given the strong misgivings he had about Nixon.

Dwight D. Eisenhower radiated honesty and sincerity, and he was a leader much loved by the American people. He was also an elusive man with a number of contradictions. He was the soldier-hero who often clashed with the Pentagon over policy and spending and at the end of his term denounced the "military-industrial complex." He was the supreme commander known for his empathy with his troops, who in a 1963 interview at the Omaha Beach cemetery movingly spoke not of the battle but of the parents whose sons lay buried there; but as President he was unable to summon imaginative sympathy for the millions of victims of segregation. He could be decisive in ordering the greatest amphibious invasion in history, or in turning back united pressure from his military advisers; but he often temporized and hesitated at home. He was a practical man, apparently not given to abstract thought, but also a Machiavellian figure shrewdly practicing an evidently elaborate theory of leadership.

Ambrose has performed an immense task, in what was obviously a labor of love, in mastering the Eisenhower papers. His manifest enthusiasm sometimes skews his judgments, but he is usually fair and always sound and comprehensive in recounting the Eisenhower Presidency. The complexities, however, remain; we need to know more in order better to understand Eisenhower and his Presidency.

A First-Rate Leader

HELMUT SCHMIDT: HELMSMAN OF GERMANY. By JONATHAN CARR. *St. Martin's. 208 pp. $25.00.*

Reviewed by EDWARD PEARCE

JONATHAN CARR, a staff writer for the (London) *Financial Times*, has given us a biography of Helmut Schmidt that is fluent, factual, and instructive, addressed (almost) to those without a background in contemporary German politics. As an introduction to the man and the events surrounding him it does a swift, lucid job which any American reader fearing a jungle of European arcana will find accessible.

German politics since the creation of the Federal Republic in 1949 has been in the hands, very nearly exclusively, of first-rate men. Of the six West German Chancellors since that date only Kurt-Georg Kiesinger could be called mediocre. Willy Brandt with his naive view of the East may have been a weak link in office, but even this emotional radical (a man with a heroic anti-Nazi record) was capable of telling German unions that had pushed through a 7-percent wage increase that they had betrayed him. His British Conservative contemporary, Edward Heath, died on his knees, politically speaking, begging coal miners to settle for 16.5 percent. (They took 31!)

And of all the able men who have ruled West Germany, Helmut Schmidt has been the ablest. A quarter-Jew who was obliged as a young officer in the Wehrmacht to keep his head down, he had no political plans or ambitions at the end of the war. His passions were (and remain) art and music; he is a pianist good enough to have recorded the Mozart Triple Concerto with Christoph Eschenbach and Justus Frantz. According to his own account, he turned from a projected career in architecture to a degree in economics, which eventually rolled him into politics, simply because in 1945 there was no architectural faculty nearer to his native Hamburg than Hanover.

Equally, he became a member of the Social Democratic party (SPD) less for its tenuous and platonic socialism than for its cleanness. The last voice to denounce Hitler in 1933 had been that of the Social Democrat Otto Wels, speaking in the Reichstag: "You may take our freedom and our lives, but our honor you cannot take. We dedicate ourselves in this historic hour to the basic principles of humanity, freedom, and socialism." Rhetoric perhaps, but, uttered within a ring of Brownshirts as the simple Austrian soldier came to power, good and honorable rhetoric. Schmidt wanted (and perhaps needed) such clean air.

The party he joined was to become a model for intelligent democratic socialists throughout Europe. Always humane and anti-Soviet, it was to retain for a few years after the war wispy traces, more cobweb than framework, of theological Marxism. A succession of defeats led to the Godesberg program of

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1959 which pulped the Marxist vocabulary, struck a hard note on national defense, and tacitly acknowledged that a high-profit economy was in the interests of working people. Today the French, Italian, and Spanish socialist parties would broadly agree. Only the British have a socialist party committed to ancestor worship (and to a political posture well to the Left of the Italian Communists).

The party created in West Germany in the 1950's was almost ideally suited to the talents and temperament of Helmut Schmidt. Always a profoundly practical, empirically-minded man, he seems, according to Carr, never to have had a romantic left-wing phase. (His contempt for the student revolutionaries of 1968 was bottomless.) An intellectual he might be—how many heads of government are capable of giving a cogent academic lecture on Kant?—but it was the element of low practicality to be found even in Kant which attracted Helmut Schmidt. According to Kant as glossed by Schmidt, a politician is not justified by his good intentions or high moral purpose but by the critical analysis he makes of a situation and its implications. "Without such analysis his actions have no moral justification whatever." It is thus not really surprising that Schmidt despised Jimmy Carter. The thinking empiricist and the opportunistic moralist were born for each other's throats.

SCHMIDT was to arrive at the central position in West German affairs—indeed, the German chancellorship is the most important office in Western Europe—by way of an early opposition career in the Bundestag (the dominant lower house), begun in 1953. In 1962 he returned to Hamburg to run the Interior Ministry of that state, in order to be doing something. The great cliché about him is that he is a *Macher*, a doer; in this case it is a very good cliché. A brilliant success during the disastrous floods of 1962 (when he cut every corner in sight to get helicopters into the air and people out of the water, saving 1,000 lives in the process) was the basis of his reputation.

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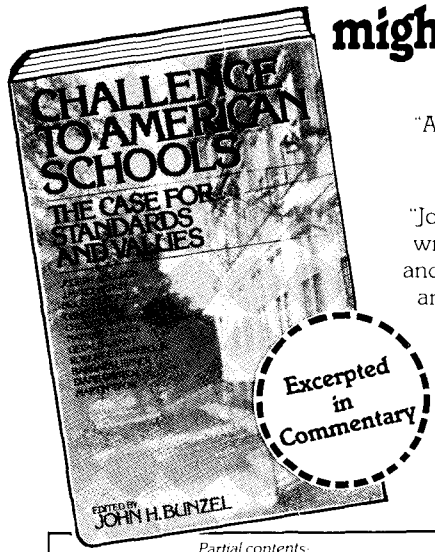

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Schmidt built upon this reputation nationally with speeches and articles which enraged the Right and Left alternately. He opposed German possession of atomic weapons, and brought right-wing Christian Democrats to their feet in fury by reminding them that when he had been a schoolboy of fourteen, "Your assent to Hitler's enabling legislation took us and millions of others into the slaughterfields of Europe and into the cellars of our cities, millions more into the concentration camps and death chambers." ("*Schmidt Schnauze*"—"Schmidt the mouth"—shouted a Christian Democratic deputy; "*Schmidt Schnauze*" has been his sobriquet to this day.) But the same Schmidt intensely annoyed his own left wing by asserting in those still-early days that a German army would have to be created, and that it should be created with SPD support as a loyal element of a liberal democratic state rather than against his party's will and out of its field of influence. In the Kantian statesman, the practical and the moral can evidently coexist without tripping over one another's feet.

By the time his party finally came to office in 1966, propelled by the studied moderation of the Godesberg program, Schmidt was big enough for the role of floor leader. Since this was a "grand coalition" of the Christian Democrats (CDU) and Social Democrats, he worked closely with Rainer Barzel of the CDU. Successively floor leader, Defense Minister, Finance and Economics Minister, he rose irresistibly on simple brute merit, despite an extensive circle of ill-wishers in his own party. With opponents, on the whole, he had harmonious relations, and was in many ways a Scoop Jackson in office: a supporter of the Western alliance and the U.S. nuclear component within it, on good terms with the West German trade-union movement, a social democrat rather than a socialist, and a man given very little to trusting the Soviet Union.

ALL *things considered, Schmidt* is the most intelligent and responsive ally the U.S. has had, whether as Defense Minister or as Chancellor. What he wanted was consistency. Unfortunately, what he got was Jimmy Carter. As Chancellor, Schmidt was willing to take on the neutron bomb which the Carter administration was urging the West Europeans to accept; given the potential for anti-war resentment in Europe, that was a notably courageous step. But the neutron bomb was then withdrawn by the President, a classic case of the Grand Old Duke leading his ten thousand men to the top of the hill and leading them down again.

As for the cruise missiles which have been installed in German, British, and Italian bases since 1983, the point cannot be made too hard or too often that these are the consequence not of an

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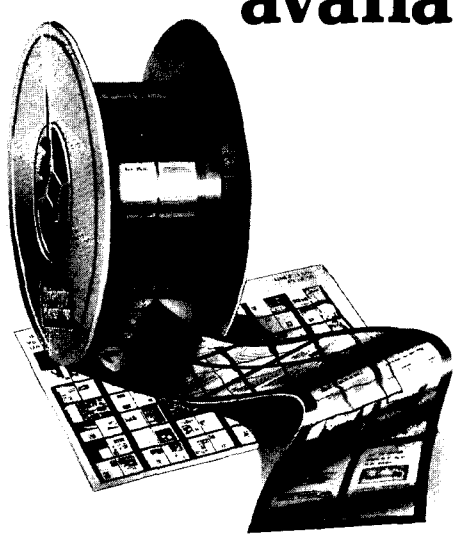

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American but of a West European initiative, led by Schmidt but strongly supported as well by the British and Italian governments. Schmidt took the Soviet installation of SS-20's, and the development of the Backfire bomber, very seriously from the first, and wanted them on the agenda of SALT II. In his own belief he had persuaded then-President Ford of the need for a Western response. But the message of Jimmy Carter was to be, in substance, this is none of your business. The letters and meetings between the Chancellor and the President grew progressively more pained and angry. A glaze of civility was kept up, but Schmidt, never long on tolerance, described Carter as "just not big enough for the game." That understated his despair.

At the Guadeloupe meeting of NATO allies in 1979 Schmidt reached an accord, together with his British and French colleagues, James Callaghan and Giscard d'Estaing, that cruise missiles would be acceptable in Western Europe if further negotiations with Moscow failed. When the time came for Carter to talk with Brezhnev and sign SALT II in Vienna, Schmidt assumed that the Guadeloupe accord would be given proper stress as evidence of alliance resolve. The Soviets later insisted (quite truthfully) to Schmidt that Carter had not raised the matter. He subsequently learned from Cyrus Vance that the issue had briefly been touched upon in Vienna . . . in an elevator chat!

As Carr points out, it is part of the melancholy confusion which divides America and Europe that at the time, newspapers in the U.S. were capable of running cartoons showing Helmut Schmidt polishing Brezhnev's boots. This incomprehension of a European leader who *asked* for Pershing missiles for defense against the Soviet threat may have derived in part from differences between the U.S. and Germany over *Ostpolitik*: the attempt, initiated by Schmidt's predecessor Willy Brandt, to have better relations with East Germany. Probably Schmidt was uncharacteristically naive in keeping that particular show on the road. Carr gives a gruesome account of a visit by Schmidt to the "Democratic Republic," in the middle of which General Jaruzelski and those behind him sprang their *Putsch* in Warsaw.

On the same trip, a visit to the major city of Rostock was called off by the East German authorities (rather too close to Gdansk, and the West German Chancellor too popular) and Schmidt was taken instead to the small town of Gustrow, whose citizens were confined to their houses to make way for busloads of party hacks, brought in to shout "Erich, Erich [Honnecker]." It can be said in general on this issue of *Ostpolitik* that the West Germans, who for years have been buying their cousins from the East and thereby picking up the social-security bill of East Germany, have been monumentally trusting and

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soft. But then the families of those being held hostage commonly are.

HELMUT SCHMIDT should be remembered over his eight-and-a-half-year period of supreme office essentially for strength and intelligence. Faced with the economic consequences of the mid-70's oil crisis, he did the exact opposite of Britain's Edward Heath. Where Heath desperately attempted to reflate the economy, Schmidt in 1974 became the first acknowledged monetarist in office, setting, through the Bundesbank, the first target for the growth of the money supply for the next year. Highly important too was the creation of the European Monetary System, a hideously complex, not always successful, but still formidable attempt to keep continental currencies in rough alignment. It was probably the most intelligent creation of the otherwise sterile European Common Economic Community.

Schmidt is also to be remembered as the Chancellor who faced and put down the outbreak of juvenile dementia known as the Red Army Faction or Baader-Meinhof gang. This group carried out a succession of murders of judges, industrialists, and other public enemies, on behalf of a lunatic ideology with many sympathizers. It was finally defeated by a superb piece of West German soldiering which rescued hostages held by kidnappers at Mogadishu airport in Somalia and resulted in the deaths, at their own hands, of the despairing gang leadership.

To defend a liberal state Schmidt had been obliged to use means imperfectly liberal. Germany's old reputation being what it was, the openings for smears against the essential democracy and legitimacy of the government were extensive. But by the end, a democratic state had done something to make Germans decently proud of the right sort of soldiery and of a government fit to command them. A man of unadvertised democratic conscience, Schmidt in a violent crisis acted rationally and planned his way out of circumstances created by unreason.

He had, and has, his detractors. Toward the end he failed to carry his party with him and meet its emotional needs, so completely was he a manager and a *Macher*; and the SPD, since his fall from office in 1982 at the hands of a shifty coalition partner, the Free Democratic party, has lapsed into a soft leftism of a kind the English could warn them about. Indeed Helmut Schmidt arguably was never much of a politician. He ruled not autocratically but almost too rationally, and there was never sufficient diplomatic gloss held over for the soothing of those who reasoned less well. Yet he remains, Charles de Gaulle not excluded, the ablest man to have governed any West European country in the last forty years.

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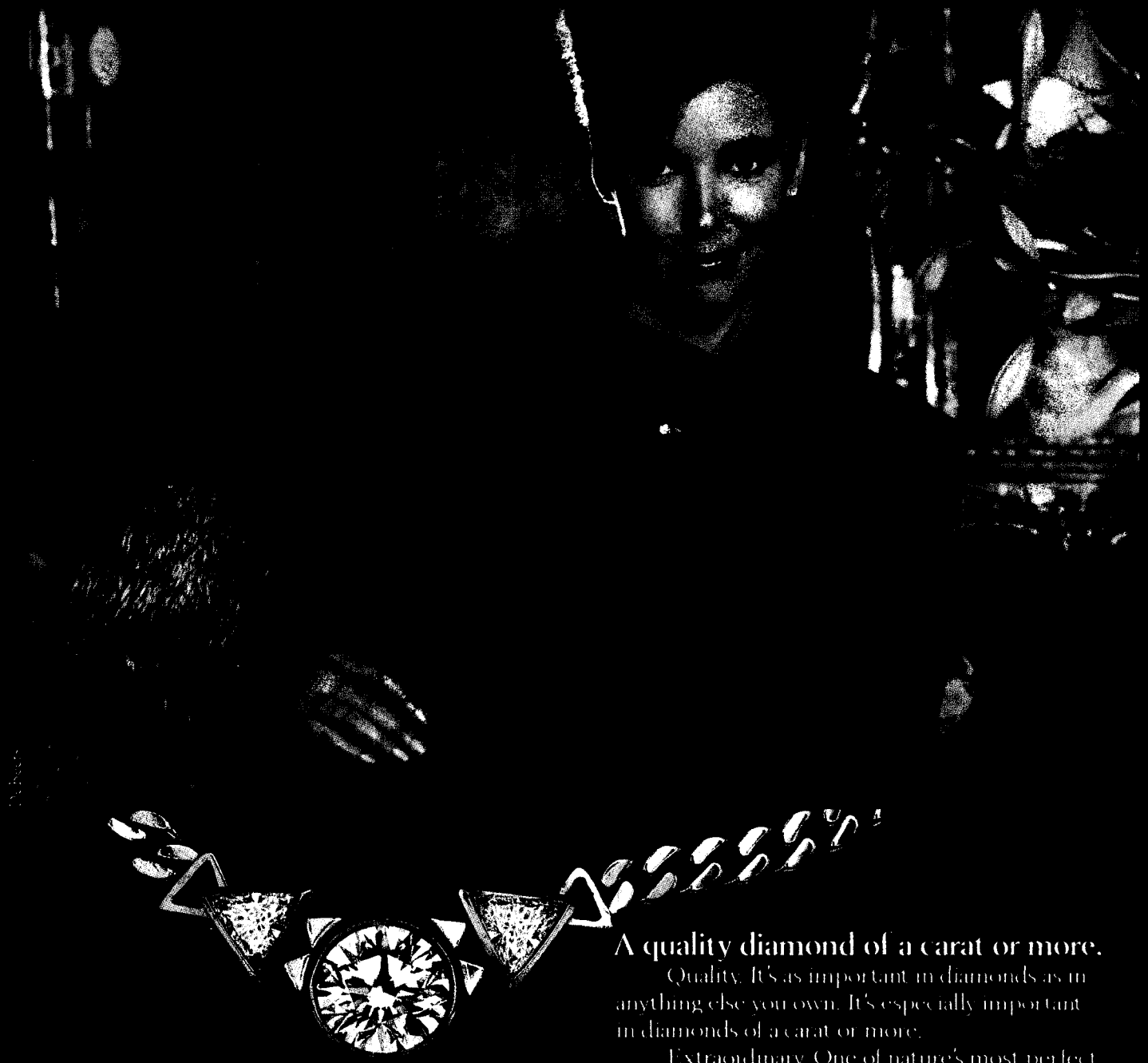

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